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THE LIFE OF

WILLIAM H. SEWARD

By

FREDERIC BANCROFT

WITH PORTRAITS

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II.

NEW YORK AND LONDON
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THE LIFE OF
WILLIAM HENRY SEWARD

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CHAPTER XXV

HE WINTER OF 1860-61: SEWARD PRESERVES THE NATIONAL STATUS

The election of Lincoln caused almost as great an
ıtburst of joy in Charleston and New Orleans as it
d in Boston and New York. The Republicans had
ined the power to prevent the extension of slavery,
ıt they were not more confident of realizing their long-
erished aim than the leaders of the cotton states were
founding a new confederacy in the near future.

Party interests had made it necessary for the Repub-
ans to belittle the threats of secession, and they had
cceeded so well that they fully deceived even them-
lves. Seward's past and present opinions illustrated
is fact. When the jubilant citizens of Auburn crowd-
about him to hear his comments on the election he
de them dismiss all thoughts of the future until some
w election should call them to renew their efforts in
yment of the price of enduring liberty. The duty of
e hour was to show magnanimity and moderation in
umph. Then came the idea, borrowed from Jefferson:
The parties engaged in an election are not, never can
, never must be, enemies, or even adversaries. We are

all fellow-citizens, Americans, brethren." An appe
would lie from the people this year by making new a
guments to the people next year. This had been th
custom of the Republicans in the past. If, contrary
that custom, others should attempt to take a more hu
ried appeal by marshalling armies and pulling down th
pillars of the republic, "let us not doubt," he said, "th
if we commend our way by our patience, our gentl
ness, our affection toward them, they, too, will, befo
they shall have gone too far, find out that our way, th
old way, their old way as well as our old way, is n
only the shortest but the best."[1]

But the rumors of the secession movements calle
him to Washington before the end of November. The
he found that the ultra-southern men were bent
disunion, not on account of grievances, as he wrot
"but from cherished disloyalty and ambition," and th
the Republicans were "ignorant of the real design
danger." For himself, he said: "I begin to see my wa
through, without sacrifice of principle. But I talk ve
little, and nothing in detail."[2] When he found th
there was no harmony of opinion among the Repub
cans, he urged them to adopt a friendly and fratern
silence—not the sullen one of the previous year.[3]

As yet the public had only the vaguest suspicions
to how Seward intended to deal with the serious pro
lem, and these suspicions were derived from rumors a
from some of Weed's articles in the *Evening Journ*
Shortly after the election Weed declared that he wou
favor the extension of the Missouri-compromise li
to California, and also an alteration of the fugitive-sla
law so as to make the counties in which slaves shou
be rescued liable for their value. He felt confide

[1] 4 Seward's *Works*, 115, 116.
[2] 2 Seward, 478
[3] 2 Seward, 479.

at there was imminent danger of disunion; that this uld be averted only by drawing out, strengthening, d combining the Union sentiment of the whole coun-, and that the Republicans could afford to be tolerant southern misunderstandings of Republican principles d aims. Hence he favored a constitutional convention hearing and correcting the grievances of each section.[1] In his annual message of 1860 Buchanan maintained th that a state had no constitutional right to secede l that the Federal government had no constitutional wer to prevent secession. He overlooked the fact that ere was not only a constitutional right but a duty to restall an attack upon the property of the nation and forearm against resistance to the collection of the venue. Had he been mindful of this, and acted ac-dingly, it seems likely that he could have prevented cession from attaining any substantial existence. Sew-l wittily characterized Buchanan's reasoning by say-g: "It shows conclusively that it is the duty of the esident to execute the laws—unless somebody op-ses him; and that no state has a right to go out of e Union—unless it wants to."[2]

Immediately after the message had been read an an-y discussion about secession and slavery broke forth both chambers. The leaders of the cotton states, th "knit brows and portentous scowls," pointed angry eeches at their victorious opponents; they enumer-ed violations of the Constitution by the Republicans, d gave notice that withdrawal from the Union would their means of redress. Hale replied that he could ow aggressions on the part of the South that would initely outweigh and outnumber all that could be unted against the North; that if the alternative were

[1] For the article of November 30, 1860, see 1 Greeley's *American nflict*, 360.

[2] 2 Seward, 480.

the acceptance of secession or the waging of war against a revolt to escape the results of a constitutional election his choice would be for the latter.[1] Then Iverson, of Georgia, exclaimed: "We will meet . . . all the myrmidons of abolitionism and black Republicanism everywhere, upon our soil; and . . . we will 'welcome you with bloody hands to hospitable graves.'"[2] Unfortunately the advocates of resistance against secession were destined to be in a helpless minority for three months while the secessionists had the advantage of that time in which to develop and execute their plans. So the southern extremists devoted themselves to arousing sentiment in favor of a slave-holding confederacy. On the other hand, most of the radical Republicans insisted that, as their party had not violated the Constitution they must yield neither to the demands for compromise nor to secession, but that all the states must remain in the Union and await the effect of the changing opinion of the North.

Although each house soon appointed a special committee to consider the best means to allay the excitement, the breach widened and the strength of disunion increased. Many of the Garrisonian abolitionists rejoiced in the prospect of realizing their dogma, "No union with slave-holders."[3]

With vastly more injurious effect, the New York *Tribune*, the most influential of the Republican newspapers had proclaimed, in November, that if several states should decide to secede, they should be allowed to depart in peace, in deference to the sacred right of revolution. Nearly all of the Bell-Everett party, and most of the

[1] *Globe*, 1860–61, 9, 10. [2] *Ibid.*, 12.

[3] "Sacrifice anything to keep the slave-holding states in the Union God forbid! We will rather build a bridge of gold and pay their toll over it," exclaimed Wendell Phillips in January, 1861.—1 *Speeches*, 35

[4] 1 Greeley's *American Conflict*, 359.

Democrats, were opposed to enforcing the laws at any point where the secessionists threatened resistance. And the inhabitants of the southern border states were almost unanimous in demanding at least the adoption of measures—best expressed in the Crittenden compromise—that would make slavery secure where it then existed and in every part of the present and future territory of the United States south of the Missouri-compromise line, and that would remove the obstructions to the return of fugitive slaves. With one voice the thousand commercial interests of northern cities also called upon Congress to avoid war by making some such concession to the South.

The rarest opportunity for immortal fame ever offered to a President was at this time thrust upon Buchanan. Had he spoken and acted promptly and boldly in defence of Federal property, the whole North and a large proportion of the people in North Carolina, Tennessee, and the southern border states would have supported him. Then Lincoln's administration would have fallen heir to the policy of national self-defence. But Buchanan's arm was nerveless and his reason weak. Habitual servility to the southern leaders made him unwilling to oppose his old political friends even when he knew that they were plotting treason. Although he was sincerely in favor of preserving the Union, it would have been difficult for the secessionists to find a more serviceable President. As John Sherman sarcastically wrote at the time: "The Constitution provided against every probable vacancy in the office of President; but did not provide for utter imbecility."[1]

Appearances soon indicated that the President's indecision and the anger of the coercionists would render haste on the part of the secessionists both urgent and

[1] *The Sherman Letters*, 95.

easy. If the Union was to be maintained, it must b
done under Republican leadership. Yet the membe
of the other parties felt so confident that there was a
ulterior purpose to make unconstitutional inroads upo
slavery that they were unwilling to support the R
publicans. Even the victors themselves saw that the
might precipitate hostilities without having the strengt
necessary for successful resistance. The possibility tha
vigorous measures might result in a civil war cause
many even of their own partisans to look with favo
upon some of the propositions for compromise. Henc
there was danger that Lincoln might come into pow
er with the strength of his party much reduced sinc
November, confronted with an organized confederac
of several states, and with an opposition at home tha
would make any attempt to conquer secession futile,
not foolhardy.

Before Congress had time to consider any compr
mises, the leading secessionists issued an appeal urgin
every slave-holding state to "seek speedy and absolu
separation from the unnatural and hostile Union."
This fanned the cotton-state fires into a blaze. O
December 20, 1860, South Carolina passed an ordinan
of secession. Then she sent commissioners to Was
ington to seek recognition of her independence, an
despatched agents to urge other states hurriedly
withdraw from the Union and to choose delegates to
southern congress. The business interests of the Nor
were greatly affected. No one could anticipate even
for more than a few hours. Yet secession was still in
theoretical stage; no violence had been used against t
Federal government, although it had been threatene
Buchanan had not positively announced what his po
tion would be in that event. Naturally, Lincoln had n

[1] McPherson's *Political History of the Rebellion*, 37.

yet shaped a definite policy, and did not wish to be held responsible for one before his time.

Seward's past no less than his present position in his party gave him special responsibilities and opportunities in such a crisis. Every one regarded him as the foremost Republican. At times he had talked like a radical, but he had always acted upon the maxim that the highest statesmanship consists in getting the best results from actual conditions. No one on his side of the Senate, and perhaps no one in either house, had such pleasant personal relations with the other members of Congress. It was assumed as a matter of course that he would be the controlling influence in the coming administration. His pre-eminence, together with his immovable calmness when others were excited, caused the country to suppose that he had a solution for the difficulties, and that his actions would be indicative of Lincoln's present opinions and future policy. But for weeks he carefully refrained from expressing his opinions publicly; privately he wrote such sentences as these:

December 7: "The madcaps of the South want to be inflamed, so as to make their secession irretrievable. Good men there want moderation on the part of the government, so that they may in time produce a counter-movement." December 8: "I am, thus far, silent, not because I am thinking of proposing compromises, but because I wish to avoid, myself, and restrain other Republicans, from interneddling, just now—when concession, or solicitation, or solicitude would encourage, and demonstrations of firmness of purpose would exasperate."

In the middle of December he went North intending to spend the holidays at home. He had declined an invitation to attend the annual dinner of the New England Society in New York, December 22d. But senatorial duties made it urgent for him to be in Washington Monday, December 24th. Leaving Auburn Saturday

morning, the 22d, he arrived late that evening at th Astor House, where the members of the New Englan Society were still at table. As soon as his presence i the hotel became known, a special committee was sen to fetch him. He went reluctantly, and was receive with such enthusiasm that he was compelled to speak With humor in perfect harmony with the circumstance of his impressment and the mood of the banqueter over their *liqueurs* and cigars, he began by saying tha he had heard they were all Yankees, and he inferre that they would, therefore, want to know all about th status. In colloquial phrases, with a pun or two, an with amusing repartee at their interjected questions, h made several diverting references to some of those pre ent, and to a few matters in state and national politics He believed that the old centripetal force of commo interest, which had drawn the states into a confedera tion and which the fathers had concisely expressed i *E pluribus unum*, still existed. Therefore, secessio must be a passion, a delusion, a "humbug" even, whic could not withstand a calm debate.

"We all know that [that New York would go to th defence of Charleston in case of her being attacked by foreign nation]; everybody knows that: therefore they d not humbug me with their secession. I do not believ they will humbug you, and I do not believe that if they d not humbug you or me that they will succeed very lon in humbugging themselves."

Here was his first hint of a dangerous illusion, as wi be seen later. He concluded with an expression of h opinion that the agitation for secession had steadily d clined in strength since the day of the election, an

[1] 1 Moore's *Rebellion Record*, Documents, pp. 4–7, and N. Y. *Times* December 24th, give verbatim reports of the speech, indicating t applause and interruptions. The speech printed in 4 *Works*, 644–5 omits much and is a careful revision.

at "sixty days' more suns will give you a much bright- and more cheerful atmosphere."[1]

At the time many were shocked by Seward's levity, nd he has been severely criticised since because he was vial, evasive, and over-optimistic, rather than serious, ank, and precise. While the censure is not altogether njust, it at least overlooks two most important facts: at it was still too soon for the Republican leaders to ave shaped a definite policy; and that, in any case, is occasion would have been a most unfit one on hich to explain it. It was necessary for Seward to eak in order to prevent damaging inferences; he had oken without creating excitement or committing him- lf or his party to any plans for the future. His opin- ns were soothing and tentative, and the extraordinary plause with which they were received was good evi- nce that they were opportune. Two days later he rtially explained his optimism by saying: "Stocks ere up and commercial skies were brightening. The prehension of disunion had, for that reason, visibly ated."[2]

On December 24th he met his colleagues of the "Union ving Committee of Thirteen." With the unanimous nsent of the members from his section, he offered three opositions: First, that the Constitution should never altered so as to authorize Congress to abolish or in- fere with slavery in the states; second, that the gitive-slave law should be amended so as to grant a ry-trial to the fugitive; third, that Congress should re- est all the states to revise their legislation concerning rsons recently resident in other states, and to repeal laws that contravened the Constitution of the United ates or any law of Congress made in pursuance there-

[1] 1 Moore's *Rebellion Record*, Documents, p. 7. This prophecy was out of his *Works*.

[2] 2 Seward, 483.

of. Later he offered a fourth proposition: that Congre
should pass a law to punish invasions of one state fro
another, and conspiracies to effect such invasions.[1]
the other propositions Seward wrote to Lincoln: "Wi
the unanimous consent of our section [of the committ
—Seward, Collamer, Doolittle, Grimes, and Wade]
offered three propositions which seemed to me to cov
the ground of the suggestion made by you, through M
Weed, as I understand it."[2] Hence there was nothi
peculiar about Seward's position as indicated at this tim

[1] 2 Seward, 484; Senate Reports, 2d Sess. 36th Con., No. 288, p
10, 11, 13.

[2] 2 Seward, 484. Heretofore it has been supposed that Lincol
memorandum, "prepared for the consideration of the Republic
members" of the Senate committee of thirteen had been lost, and
biographers seem never to have known its precise wording. A se
rate sheet in the Seward MSS. contains these sentences (and nothi
else) in Lincoln's handwriting:

"Resolved:

"That the fugitive slave clause of the Constitution ought to be
forced by a law of Congress, with efficient provisions for that obj
not obliging private persons to assist in its execution, but punishing
who resist it, and with the usual safeguards to liberty, securing f
men against being surrendered as slaves—

"That all state laws, if there be such, really, or apparently, in c
flict with such law of Congress, ought to be repealed; and no op
sition to the execution of such law of Congress ought to be made—

"That the Federal Union must be preserved."

That this is the original "suggestion" is indicated by the followi
sentences from Seward's letter already referred to: "This eveni
the Republican members of the committee, with Judge Trumb
and Mr. Fessenden, met at my house, to consider your written s
gestion, and determine whether it shall be offered. While we th
the ground has been already covered, we find that, in the form y
give it, it would divide our friends, not only in the committee, bu
Congress, a portion being unwilling to give up their old opinion, t
the duty of executing the constitutional provisions, concerning fu
tives from service, belongs to the states, and not at all to Congress.
2 Seward, 484. The first of Seward's formal propositions, made ab
a fortnight later, as a means of preserving peace gave the gist of I
coln's first point. See *post*, p. 14.

During the holidays the excitement in Washington reatly increased. The President's communications with he commissioners from South Carolina precipitated an ngry outbreak between the two factions in the Cabnet. It was rumored, and widely believed, that the city ras to be seized by the secessionists. Seward's intimate elations with loyal Democrats in the Cabinet, in the enate, and in the South, enabled him to keep himself nformed of all that was occurring, and he made long eports to Lincoln. So rapidly did the secession frenzy eem to have spread that on the last day of December e thought the country to be in an "emergency of robable civil war and dissolution of the Union."[1] By anuary 3, 1861, the secessionists had gained such trength at the White House and in some of the departnents that Seward considered it necessary, as he wrote, o "assume a sort of dictatorship for defence," and to ork night and day against the contemplated revolution. nd he added: "My hope, rather my confidence, is unbated."[2]

The question of separation was hotly discussed in all ne slave states, and it was everywhere alleged that the epublicans intended to put their antislavery ideas into ractice after the inauguration. However, in North Carona, Arkansas, Tennessee, and the border states, the maority deprecated the dissolution of the Union. Fortuately, Virginia believed that both slavery and state rights ould be preserved within the Union. The very fact that ne leaders of the cotton states were riding with whip and our aroused a considerable feeling of opposition.[3] But

[1] 2 Seward, 489. [2] 2 Seward, 491.

[3] Early in January, 1861, Governor Letcher sent a message to the tra session of the Virginia legislature, in which he indignantly prosted against the efforts that South Carolina and Mississippi were aking to compel the border slave states to join the secession movent by threatening to cut off the market for their slaves. He would,

unless this opposition should be encouraged, it was sur
to disappear; for there was a wide-spread and genuin
fear, which in most instances amounted to a convi
tion, that Republican rule would inevitably undermin
slavery, and, therefore, that its safety demanded a slav
holding confederacy.

For the Republicans there was but one of two course
to pursue. Charles Sumner saw the difficulty as plainl
as Seward, and stated the problem a few days later b
writing: "People are anxious to save our forts. . .
but I am more anxious far to *save our principles*. . . .'
Talking of force and of saving principles served a goo
purpose in keeping up the flagging spirit of many pe
sons at the North, but it also helped to fuse, rather tha
to separate, the different elements at the South.

During the debates in Congress it was the Southern
ers that had kindled enthusiasm and applause. Th
angry logic of the Northerners was no match for th
picturesque and defiant declamation of their opponent
By January 11th, Mississippi, Florida, and Alabama ha
followed South Carolina's example. Time and the di
cussion of constitutional grievances had deepened sout
ern convictions and exhibited the helplessness of th
Republicans. It was announced that Seward woul
speak on January 12th. This aroused intense curiosit
because there were such conflicting rumors about h
plans. Accordingly, on the day of his speech the a
dience was larger than had ever before assembled
the Senate-chamber.[2]

Seward declared his purpose to be to seek a truce fro

he said, resist southern coercion as readily as northern.—Richmo
Semi-Weekly *Enquirer*, January 8, 1861.

[1] 4 Pierce, 17. Before the end of January, he thought it not unlik
that all the slave states, except possibly Maryland (and Delawa
doubtless) would be out of the Union very soon.—*Ibid.*, 16.

[2] N. Y. *Tribune*, January 14, 1861; 2 Seward, 493, 494.

logmatic battles, and to appeal to the country—to the eceding South no less than to the acceding North—on he question of union. Lest his mildness might be interpreted to mean acquiescence in secession, he said: "I . . avow my adherence to the Union in its integrity nd with all its parts, with my friends, with my party, vith my state, with my country, or without either, as hey may determine; in every event, whether of peace r of war; with every consequence of honor or dishonor, f life or death."[1] The only way to dissolve the Union, ie maintained, was by constitutional amendment; but Congress should, if it could, redress any real grievances, nd then supply the President with all the means necesary to defend the Union.

For thirty years Seward had believed and frequenty declared that the Union was natural and necessary, s well as politically and economically expedient. Our eople were homogeneous and our government benefcent. Disunion would bring us humiliation abroad and ar and ruin at home. It would endanger rather than reserve slavery; for it would forfeit all but a small raction of the territory of the United States, and reove every constitutional barrier against a direct attack pon slavery. Dissolution would not only arrest but it ould extinguish the greatness of our country; it would rop the curtain before all our national heroes; public rosperity would give place to retrogression, for standig armies would consume our substance; and our liberty, ow as wide as our grand territorial dimensions, would e succeeded by the hateful and intolerable espionage of ilitary despotism. The issue, then, was really between ose who cherished the Union and those who desired s dissolution by force.[2]

[1] 4 *Works*, 651.

[2] This is the merest outline of several grand passages.—4 *Works*, 54–65.

It was as much Seward's duty to avoid saying any thing that could be turned to the advantage of secessio as to urge considerations that would directly strengthe national sentiment. Jefferson Davis had said, two day before, that if the doctrine of coercion were accepted a the theory of the government, its only effect would be t precipitate men of his opinion into an assertion of thei ideas.[1] Seward now averred that there was no politica good that he would seek by revolutionary action. Ther in sentences that were designed to soothe the South, h announced:

"If others shall invoke that form of action to oppose an overthrow government, they shall not, so far as it depend on me, have the excuse that I obstinately left myself to b misunderstood. In such a case I can afford to meet preju dice with conciliation, exaction with concession which sur renders no principle, and violence with the right hand c peace."

As evidence of what he was willing to do for the sak of peace and harmony, he formulated his views unde five heads:

First, he acknowledged the full force of the fugitive slave clause of the Constitution, but thought that th special provisions for its execution should be so modifie as not to endanger the liberty of free blacks, or to con pel private citizens to assist in the capture of slave He also favored the repeal both of the personal-libert laws of the free states and of the laws of the slav states that contravened the Constitution by restrictin the liberties of citizens from the other states.

Second, slavery in the states was free from congre sional control, and he was willing to make it so perm nently by constitutional amendment.

Third, after the admission of Kansas as a free stat

[1] *Globe*, 1860–61, 310.

ıe would consent to the consolidation of all the territo-
ies into two states, and admit them without restriction
s to slavery, if the right to make subdivisions into sev-
ral convenient states could be reserved. But he thought
hat the Constitution did not permit such reservation.
f it were feasible, he would prefer to have the present
ifficulties settled in a regular constitutional convention,
when the eccentric movements of secession and dis-
nion shall have ended, in whatever form that end may
ome, and the angry excitement of the hour shall have
ubsided, . . . then, and not till then—one, two, three
ears hence."

Fourth, he would favor laws to prevent invasion of
ny state by citizens of any other state.

Fifth, since he regarded physical bonds—such as high-
ays, railroads, rivers, and canals—as vastly more power-
ıl than any covenants, he would support measures for
northern and for a southern railroad to the Pacific.

In general explanation he added:

"If, in the expression of these views, I have not proposed
hat is expected or desired by others, they will do me the
ıstice to believe that I am so far from having suggested
hat, in many respects, would have been in harmony with
herished convictions of my own. I learned from Jefferson
ıat, in political affairs, we cannot always do what seems to
s absolutely best. . . . We must be content to lead when
e can, and to follow when we cannot lead; and if we can-
ot, at any time, do for our country all the good that we
ould wish, we must be satisfied with doing for her all the
ood that we can."

The concluding sentences of this speech were a fitting
limax to his appeal for forbearance and union:

"Soon enough, I trust, for safety, it will be seen that
edition and violence are only local and temporary, and
ıat loyalty and affection to the Union are the natural
entiments of the whole country. Whatever dangers there
hall be, there will be the determination to meet them;

whatever sacrifices, private or public, shall be needful fo
the Union, they will be made. I feel sure that the hou
has not come for this great nation to fall. . . . This Unio
has not yet accomplished what good for mankind wa
manifestly designed by Him who appoints the seasons an
prescribes the duties of states and empires. N ; if it wer
cast down by faction to-day, it would rise again and re
appear in all its majestic proportions to-morrow. It is th
only government that can stand here. Woe! woe! to th
man that madly lifts his hand against it. It shall continu
and endure; and men, in after times, shall declare that thi
generation, which saved the Union from such sudden an
unlooked-for dangers, surpassed in magnanimity even tha
one which laid its foundations in the eternal principles o
liberty, justice, and humanity."

Seward's patriotic eloquence was so impressive tha
more than one Senator was seen to express his sympath
in tears.[1] If the plan was inadequate it was becaus
human ingenuity was inadequate to the task. Consid
ering the actual conditions and what was most urgen
at that time, there is reason to believe that this was a
wise, as patriotic, and as important a speech as has eve
been delivered within the walls of the Capitol. If Sew
ard had spoken as most of the Republicans had done, o
if he had gone no farther than Lincoln had even con
fidentially expressed a willingness to go, by March 4t
there would have been no Union that any one coul
have summoned sufficient force to save or to re-e
tablish. To Seward, almost alone, belongs the credit o
devising a *modus vivendi*. But the country was to
excited to estimate justly the value of such a speech

[1] 2 Seward, 494; 4 *Works*, 118.

[2] Seward wrote home on January 13th: "Distraction rules th
hour. I hope what I have done will bring some good fruits, and,
any case, clear my own conscience of responsibility, if, indeed, I am
engage in conducting a war against a portion of the American people
—2 Seward, 496. And again the next day: "The city is bewilder
by the speech. But things look better."—*Ibid.*

early every one demanded a comprehensive declaration either for compromise and peace or for coercion and war. The zeal of the abolitionists and of the secessionists had bred a fanaticism that made the importance of preserving the Union seem small indeed. While Garrison attacked Seward, he called upon the North to "recognize the fact that the Union is dissolved."[1] Sumner and Chase had protested in advance against Seward's sentiments, and they deplored them afterwards.[2] So general was the disapprobation of the Republican Representatives that it was feared they would call a caucus to pass resolutions in disapproval of Seward's ideas.[3] Even Mrs. Seward objected to what she called his "concessions."[4] Many persons understood the conciliatory tone to be equivalent to a promise to make a concession of principle.[5] On the other hand, Lincoln wrote: "Your recent speech is well received here, and, I think, is doing good all over the country."[6] Ray Palmer praised it in the highest terms, and pronounced it worthy of "the distinguished men of the best days of the republic."[7] George William Curtis wrote to a friend: "I hope you like Seward's speech as I do. I see by the New York papers that people are beginning to see how great a speech it is. Webster had his 7th of March, and went wrong; Seward his, and went right."[8]

On January 31st Seward presented a petition signed by many thousand citizens of New York, praying for a peaceable adjustment of the national difficulties. He told the Senate that he had asked the committee that had

[1] "And if nothing but the possession of the capital will appease us, take even that, without a struggle!"—4 *Garrison*, 15.
[2] 4 Pierce's *Sumner*, 9, 17, 22; Schuckers's *Chase*, 202.
[3] Grimes to Seward, January 12, 1861. Seward MSS.
[4] 2 Seward, 496.
[5] John M. Williams to Seward, January 16, 1861. Seward MSS.
[6] January 19, 1861. Seward MSS.
[7] January 15, 1861. Seward MSS.
[8] Cary's *Curtis*, 141.

brought the memorial to him to manifest, on their
turn home, their devotion to the Union, above all oth
interests and sentiments, by speaking for it, by voti
for it, by lending it money, if it needed it, and, in t
last resort, by fighting for it.[1] Again he expressed
hope and confidence that the Union would still be p
served. One reason for this was his belief that t
great question of the past—slavery in the territories
had been practically settled, and that, too, in the
terest of freedom. In opposition to what freedom h
gained by the admission of the free states of Californ
Minnesota, Oregon, and Kansas, slavery could count b
twenty-four slaves in all the remaining territories, whi
were about twenty-four times the size of New Yo
There was no further danger from slavery, and t
question of union or dissolution might well be giv
precedence. At the conclusion of this speech, Mas
sprang to his feet and made a persistent effort to m
represent what had been said by Seward, whom
called "the exponent of the new administration." "I
the facts be what they may, he presents but one remedy
the argument of the tyrant—force, compulsion, powe
and the Virginian hoped by reiterating the idea to
cite the people of his section into immediate actio
In his most placid manner, Seward expressed surpr
that his peaceful, fraternal, and cordial remarks could
construed into a declaration of war. He had consid
ed every proposition, he said; offered up his own p
udices; made concessions and recommended New Y
to take part in the peace conference, in the hope
effecting an arrangement; and if all should fail, he
pected that the controversy would be taken up and
tled in a constitutional convention. In comparison w
the question of union, the controversy about twenty-f
slaves was "frivolous and contemptible."

[1] 4 *Works*, 671.

[2] *Globe*, 1860–61, 65

What good came of Seward's declarations in favor of onciliation, enigmatical and self-contradictory as some f them were? "Before I spoke," he wrote to Weed, anuary 21st, "not one utterance made for the Union icited a response in either house, while every assault rought down full galleries. Since I spoke there have ot been four hundred persons in the galleries any day, nd every word for the Union brings forth a cheering esponse."[1] This was an exaggeration,[2] but the *Globe* ows that applause of unionist sentiment was much ore frequent after his speech than before it. Hunreds of thousands of northern Democrats soon began realize that they and the conservative Republicans ad a common cause. Seward renewed intimate relaons with many of his old southern Whig associates nd obtained important information. Within a week om the first speech, Virginia—although both of her enators were determined secessionists—invited all the ates to join her in a peace conference in Washington, ebruary 4th. North Carolina, Tennessee, and every order state welcomed the proposal. This of itself was practical guaranty against revolutionary movements these states and at the national capital pending the nference. On February 2d, Kentucky requested the uthern states to stop the revolution, protested against ederal coercion, proposed a national convention to mend the Constitution, and declined to call a state nvention to consider secession.[3] On February 4th irginia chose delegates to a state convention. Only small number of immediate secessionists were successl.[4] On the 8th, Tennessee decided against a state

[1] 2 Seward, 497.

[2] Wade caused "applause in galleries," December 17, 1860 (*Globe*, 4), by a strong Union speech. The *Globe* records no applause in nnection with Seward's speech of January 12th.

[3] McPherson, 8.

[4] Colonel Ritchie, who was sent by Governor Andrew on an impor-

convention by a popular majority of over thirteen thou sand.[1] Later in the month, North Carolina rejected proposition for a convention.[2] The southern borde states became calmer, and hoped for the Union. Sew ard's attitude greatly helped to bring about these result

Seward's public declarations and senatorial dutie represent but a small part of his activity. Since D cember he had been in confidential relations with A torney-General Stanton and General Scott,[3] who unite to counteract the influences of Floyd, Davis, Cobb Thompson, Slidell, and several South Carolinians, wh were alternately wheedling and frightening Buchanan From Stanton he received secret advice daily as to wha was going on in the Cabinet.[4] Late in January rumor of an attempt to seize the capital were again rif Seward drafted a resolution, which Galusha A. Gro introduced in the House, directing a committee to i vestigate whether there was any secret organization i the District hostile to the Government, and to report any officials or employees of the executive or judici departments were members of it.[5] By the middle January the financial credit of the United States ha sunk very low. The new Secretary of the Treasur

tant mission, reported, February 6, 1861: "He (Sumner) is convinc that the conspirators counted upon a different result in Virginia; tha by the 18th, the Virginia convention would have pronounced f secession; and that they were, therefore, safe in calling the Maryla convention for that day, being sure that in that event Maryland wou follow suit. If the result of the Virginia election had been in fav of the secessionists, the attack on the capital might have been carri out without waiting for the formal action of the Virginia conve tion."—1 Schouler's *Massachusetts in the Civil War*, 36.

[1] McPherson, 5. [2] *Ibid.* [3] 2 Seward, 493, 507.

[4] 2 Seward, 492; 26 *Atlantic Monthly*, 464, 465; ex-Senator Daw recollections, in 72 *Atlantic Monthly*, 163.

[5] For the resolution, see *Globe*, 1860–61, 572. Mr. Grow told t writer in 1894 that the object of offering the resolution was to convi plotters that their movements were well known.

John A. Dix, brought forward a proposition that the different states should guarantee the bonds of the national government to the extent of the surplus revenue that was deposited with them in 1837. Seward became so zealous to obtain the support of the New York legislature for this project that he sent a special messenger to Albany.[1] Lincoln and many others had felt much concern lest on February 13th, the day for counting the electoral votes, a revolt might be started, beginning with Congress. But before that date the investigation of the committee of the House, the collection of troops in Washington by General Scott, and the daily meetings of the peace conference all stood in the way of the success of such a plan, if, indeed, it had ever been formally adopted. Seward knew that as long as the peace conference could be kept in session all the states represented in it could be held in the Union. When one of the Republican delegates made a vigorous and warning speech in reply to the southern demands for constitutional guaranties, it looked as if the convention might speedily dissolve in anger and excitement.[2] Seward sent for the Republican delegate and read to him a long editorial from an ardent secession newspaper in Richmond, warning its friends that Seward was merely temporizing with the South so as to get the new administration firmly settled in power. Seward's tones and the general character of his non-committal remarks convinced the caller that the article explained his aim, and that, therefore, it was important for the Republicans to avoid arousing the Southerners.[3]

[1] 2 *Weed*, 319. He also asked Governor Andrew to urge the Massachusetts legislature to guarantee the bonds.—1 Schouler's *Massachusetts in the Civil War*, 37.

[2] Chittenden's *Conference Convention*, 105.

[3] Experience and recollections of George S. Boutwell, recounted to the writer in 1894.

Seward's efforts were untiring, and reached out in other directions. At a dinner given to the French Minister by Senator Douglas, Seward proposed this toast, asking the company to fill their glasses to the brim and to drain them to the bottom: "Away with all parties, all platforms of previous committals, and whatever else will stand in the way of the restoration of the American Union!"[1] Seward and Stanton started a patriotic movement that caused the national flag to be displayed throughout the North on Washington's birthday, 1861.[2] On February 13th the Virginia convention assembled. The unionism of a large majority of its members merely meant that they would oppose secession as long as there was reason to expect that the Republicans would not use force against any southern state and that a compromise would be made giving security to slave property. Seward's supremacy was the hope of all these men, for he had convinced them that he had a plan that would prevent the immediate secessionists from controlling. Letters from prominent Virginia politicians and from his special agents kept him informed of the trend of opinion in the state convention at Richmond.[3] It is striking evidence of the caution of Seward's management that he seems neither to have written to the correspondents nor to have told them his precise purposes. Yet he retained their confidence after the peace conference proved to be a failure and the two leading Virginia delegates, ex-President Tyler and James A. Seddon, returned home and tried to hurry their state into secession.

[1] MS. recollections of J. A. Campbell, then one of the Justices of the Supreme Court.

[2] Seward to William Schouler, June 13, 1867, 1 Schouler's *Massachusetts in the Civil War*, 41; 2 Seward, 491.

[3] These statements are based on many letters in the Seward MSS. For some of the most important of these letters, see Appendix.

Lincoln had not yet expressed his opinions as to the best way to deal with the seven states already practically in the Confederacy. But about two points he had left no room for doubt: that he would neither consent to a compromise guaranteeing new territory to slavery, nor agree to peaceable secession. He was not disposed to yield to southern demands; yet on several occasions he indicated that he would assent to any plan that would preserve peace and the Union without strengthening slavery.[1] Shortly after arriving in Washington, February 23d, Lincoln submitted to Seward for criticism a copy of his prospective inaugural address. In it he had planted himself firmly upon the Republican platform.[2] In several places sentences were lacking in tact, and occasional phrases had a flavor of dogmatism or severity, considering the times. It concluded with the suggestive sentence, "With you, and not with me, is the solemn question of 'Shall it be peace or a sword?'" It was all intended in a kindly spirit, and some passages were generous and touching, but other parts would have more than counteracted them.

Seward went through the entire address, making a sentence here and there less positive, rounding many of the phrases, and softening some of the adjectives. He counseled the omission of a few careless and useless sentences; and where Lincoln had written, "A disruption of the Federal Union is menaced, and, so far as can be on paper, is already effected," Seward changed the last part into "heretofore only menaced, is now formidably attempted." He suggested that, in lieu of the conclusion quoted, the address should end with "some words

[1] 2 *Weed*, 311; 1 Lincoln's *Works*, 657, 658, 661, 662, 669; Schuckers's *Chase*, 202; 2 Seward, 484, 485.

[2] 3 Nicolay and Hay's *Lincoln*, 327–44, gives Seward's suggestions, the wording of the original draft, and the inaugural address as delivered.

of affection, some of calm and cheerful confidence," and wrote the striking paragraph about "our bonds of affection" and "the mystic chords," which, only slightly changed, became one of Lincoln's most impressive passages.

The letter that Seward sent when he returned the draft is too important to be abbreviated.

"*Sunday Evening, February 24th.*

"My dear Sir,—I have suggested many changes, of little importance, severally, but, in their general effect, tending to soothe the public mind.

"Of course the concessions are, as they ought to be, if they are to be of avail, at the cost of the winning, the triumphant party. I do not fear their displeasure. They will be loyal, whatever is said. Not so the defeated, irritated, angered, frenzied party. I, my dear sir, have devoted myself singly to the study of the case here—with advantages of access and free communication with all parties of all sections. I have a common responsibility and interest with you, and I shall adhere to you faithfully in every case. You must, therefore, allow me to speak frankly and candidly. In this spirit I declare to you that my conviction is that the *second* and *third* paragraphs, even if modified as I propose in my amendments, will give such advantage to the disunionists that Virginia and Maryland will secede, and we shall within ninety, perhaps within sixty days, be obliged to fight the South for this capital, with a divided North for our reliance; and we shall not have one loyal magistrate or ministerial officer south of the Potomac.

"In that case the dismemberment of the Republic would date from the inauguration of a Republican administration. I, therefore, most respectfully counsel the omission of those paragraphs. I know the tenacity of party friends and I honor and respect it. But I know also that they know nothing of the real peril of the crisis. It has not been their duty to study it, as it has been mine. Only the soothing words which I have spoken have saved us and carried us along thus far. Every loyal man, and, indeed, every disloyal man in the South, will tell you this.

"Your case is quite like that of *Jefferson*. He brought

the first Republican party into power against and over a party ready to resist and dismember the government. Partisan as he was, he sank the partisan in the patriot, in his inaugural address; and propitiated his adversaries by declaring, 'We are all Federalists; all Republicans.' I could wish that you would think it wise to follow this example, in this crisis. Be sure that while all your administrative conduct will be in harmony with Republican principles and policy, you cannot lose the Republican party by practising, in your advent to office, the magnanimity of a victor.

"Very faithfully your friend,

"WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

"GENERAL REMARKS

"The argument is strong and conclusive, and ought not to be in any way abridged or modified.

"But something besides, or in addition to, argument is needful to meet and remove *prejudice* and *passion* in the *South* and *despondency* and *fear* in the *East:* some words of affection; some of calm and cheerful confidence."[1]

Nor was this the limit of Seward's soothing influence. He was especially anxious that Jefferson Davis, the President of the Confederacy—the formation of which practically began at Montgomery, February 4th—should believe that Lincoln would favor reconciliation and peace. Seward knew that if Davis considered war to be inevitable, he would prepare the Confederacy for it, and thereby make the problem more difficult. Senator Gwin, of California, had been bred in the school of Calhoun, and continued to be the trusted friend and adviser of Davis. Seward and Gwin had been intimately associated as advocates of a railroad to the Pacific. Seward now persuaded Gwin to write to Davis saying that if Seward should go into Lincoln's Cabinet, he would be a firm advocate of the amicable settlement of every ques-

[1] 2 Seward, 512, 513.

tion between the sections.[1] Shortly before the inauguration it became known that Chase was to go into Lincoln's Cabinet. In order to relieve himself from further responsibility, Gwin prepared a despatch to Jefferson Davis saying that this was understood to indicate a change to a war policy. When Ward showed the prospective despatch to Seward, he altered it so that Davis was advised that, in spite of Chase's appointment, the administration would be for peace.[2]

After watching a public man's words and acts concerning a question for several weeks or months, there would ordinarily be no doubt as to his opinions regarding it. But Seward believed that circumstances made it best to remain uncommitted as to the precise method that he thought would be effective.[3] Nevertheless, he had certain definite aims. It will be less difficult to indicate what they were after we know whether he and Weed were substantially of one mind.

In the long article of November 30th, Weed twice declared that he spoke only for himself.[4] Several times Seward implied or asserted that he was not responsible for Weed's course, but so far as is known he never directly affirmed that he was opposed to Weed's opinions.[5] Weed and Seward saw shortly after the election

[1] Gwin's posthumous article in the *Overland Monthly*, 2d series, 467. Gwin and Seward often used Samuel Ward, popularly known as "King of the Lobby," and they met at his house to avoid attracting attention. A memorandum from Ward, written shortly after Lincoln's inaugural address, reports to Seward the receipt of this letter by Davis.—Seward MSS. [2] 18 *Overland Monthly*, 2d series, 469.

[3] "I talked very little, and nothing in detail," continued to be his rule. When writing confidentially to Lincoln he stated facts with precision, but he seemed studiously to keep back his own ideas as to remedies. Even then he enjoined secrecy, and added: "My power to do anything would be seriously impaired, if what I write were made known."—2 Seward, 484, 485. [4] 1 Greeley, 361.

[5] December 2d, Seward wrote home: "You will see that Mr. Weed

hat the Southerners were in earnest and that civil war nd disunion were threatened. What could be done o avert either or both depended upon the public opin- on of the North. It was urgent that some one should ake tentative propositions to test northern sentiment. eward could not do this without wasting his popular- y in mere experiments. So the initiative was left to

ts me out of responsibility for his well-intentioned but rather im- ulsive movements. He promised me to do so." The same letter id: "I am engaged busily in studying and gathering my thoughts r the Union." Evidently he had not fully made up his mind as to course. (2 Seward, 479.) Again, December 4th: "Mr. Weed's ticles have brought perplexities about me which he, with all his tuteness, did not foresee. But you need not expect, or rather fear, at I will act unwisely or wrong." (2 Seward, 480.) Notwithstand- g these sentences, Mrs. Seward became so much concerned lest the enator might favor a compromise that she wrote to him expressing r fears. Again he shunned giving her a clear and comprehensive swer: "I am, thus far, silent, not because I am thinking of propos- g compromises, but because I wish to avoid, myself, and restrain her Republicans, from intermeddling." . . . (2 Seward, 480.) A epublican senatorial caucus was called on the first day of the session r the purpose of finding out if Seward agreed with Weed's sug- stions about compromise. Seward snubbed his indiscreet col- agues, and declined to give them any satisfaction. (2 *Weed,* 308.) A few days later, when the Albany *Evening Standard* asserted posi- vely that he had aided in the preparation of an important article on mpromise in the *Evening Journal,* the Auburn *Advertiser* printed e following: "Mr. Seward, in conversation, fully repudiates the legraph and newspaper assumptions of his authority for or concur- nce in the Albany *Journal's* article of yesterday. He says he won- rs how long it will take newspapers to learn that when he desires be heard he is in the habit of speaking in his proper place for him- f."—Cited 3 Rhodes, 159. This is not considered final. Nor would it if it were plainly authoritative, for Seward was determined to con- al his opinions. In public he called secession impossible and a "hum- g," while in private he was conducting a "dictatorship for defence," d studying how to avert civil war and disunion. Had he openly proved Weed's course, the radical Republicans would have made a ld attack upon him, which would have deprived him of most of his luence in the party, and it would have cost him his prospective place Lincoln's Cabinet. Even as it was, his difficulties were very great.

the *Evening Journal*, of which his son Frederick, the future Assistant Secretary of State, was associate editor. The New York *Times* and the *Courier and Enquirer* followed. Weed and Seward were never in closer communication than during these months. Weed's two most elaborate articles, those of November 30th and December 17th, appeared just after he and Seward had held long conferences. Had there been any considerable difference in their opinions, Seward would hardly have asked Weed to go to Springfield to express to Lincoln his (Seward's) views on public affairs.[1] It has been positively stated that Weed favored the Crittenden compromise.[2] However, he objected to the proposition that in all the present and future territory south of 36° 30′ slavery should be recognized, but he thought that that could be rendered satisfactory if provision should be made so that territory should be acquired only by treaty or by a two-thirds vote of Congress.[3] Seward explained his non-committalism as to any specific plan, by telling the Senate, on January 31st, that no propositions had been offered that promised to bring about reconciliation.[4] There was a close resemblance[5] between the expressions employed by Seward and Weed respectively when speaking of the need of amending the

[1] 2 Seward, 482.

[2] 2 *Weed*, 312.

[3] *Evening Journal*, December 19, 1860 , January 22, 1861.

[4] 4 *Works*, 671.

[5] "Is it strange, then, that this complex system of our government should be found to work, after the lapse of seventy years, a little roughly, and that it requires that the engineer should look into the various parts of the engine, and see where the gudgeon is worn out, and watch that the main wheel be kept in motion?" —Seward, 4 *Works*, 647.

"After more than seventy years of 'wear and tear,' of collision and abrasion, it should be no cause of wonder that the machinery of government is found weakened, or out of repair, or even defective."—Weed, quoted 1 Greeley, 361.

Constitution and of the question of slavery in the territories.[1] Weed spoke with equal boldness for a compromise and in condemnation of Buchanan's failure to enforce the laws and to defend the forts.[2] Circumstances forbade that Seward should be explicit about either. However, no conflict of opinion on any essential point has been found, while numerous unmentioned signs indicate that they had a common aim. Each adopted the course best suited to his surroundings, but, nevertheless, they were in close alliance.[3]

[1] "There has been a real, a vital question in this country for twelve years at least—a question of slavery in the territories of the United States. . . . It has been an earnest and, I regret to say, an angry controversy; but the admission of Kansas into the Union yesterday settled at least all that was vital or important in the question, leaving behind nothing but the passions which the contest had engendered."—4 *Works*, 673.

"The continued blindness of the Democracy and the continued madness of slavery enabled us to elect Lincoln. That success ends our mission, so far as Kansas and the encroachments of slavery into free territory are concerned. We have no territory that invites slavery for any other than political objects, and, with the power of territorial organization in the hands of Lincoln, there is no political temptation in all the territory belonging to us. The fight is over. Practically the issues of the late campaign are obsolete."—Weed to Preston King, 2 *Weed*, 309.

[2] *Evening Journal*, December 21, 22, 1860, January 4, 11, 12, 16, 17, 22, and 25, 1861

[3] The following letters from Weed show that he and Seward were working together like the two hands of one man.

"Albany, *January* 9, [1861].

"Dear Seward,—I am now less anxious about *time* than I was. Monday will answer and is better than you should be hurried.

"I wish I could see what you intend in its completeness. Now that you print speak for all. Words should be weighed.

"The war spirit is rising and raging. The sooner the war is, the safer the ground you propose to occupy. I enclose Mr. Lincoln's propositions, in the hope that you substantially accept his views on the two kindred questions.

Seward was studiously equivocal or general in his expressions. When he went beyond this, he was particular to enjoin secrecy. This was not only justifiable, but it was also necessary as a means of using his peculiar position to the best advantage. Many of his expressions make it plain that he was much less concerned about what he should concede than about what could be conceded effectively and without danger to political interests. On December 26th he wrote to Lincoln: "Nothing could *certainly* restrain them [the border slave states from joining the cotton states], but the adoption of Mr. Crittenden's compromise. and I do not see the slightest indications of its adoption, on the Republican side of Congress."[1] Again on January 27, 1861, he sent these plaintive sentences:

"The appeals of the Union men in the border states for something of concession or compromise are very painful, since they say that without it their states must all go with the tide, and your administration must begin with the free states meeting all southern states in a hostile confederacy. Chance might render the separation perpetual. Disunion has been contemplated and discussed so long there that they have become frightfully familiar with it, and even such men as Mr. Scott and William C. Rives are so far disunionists as to think that they would have the right and

"I could not see Mr. Gilmer [probably about going into Lincoln's Cabinet], but hope that you have done so.

"Blatchford was off before I could see him.

"I return the letter. "Truly yours,

"T. WEED.

"You see that the murder is out!" [This means that Seward's selection as Secretary of State is publicly reported.]

An undated note written a day or two earlier said:

"Mr. Gilmer was in committee. I go without seeing him.

"Pray work out your salvation and that of the country as speedily as you can. *Offer* all that is right and *demand* all that is due.

"I do so want it to be right that I shall think of nothing else.

"Swett should see Mr. Gilmer if you have not time." — Seward MSS.

[1] 2 Seward, 485.

e wise in going if we will not execute new guaranties which would be abhorrent in the North. It is almost in ain that I tell them to wait, let us have a truce on sla- ery, put our issue on disunion, and seek remedies for ltimate griefs in a constitutional question [convention?]."

After a few sentences he made it still stronger:

"In any case you are to meet a hostile armed confederacy hen you commence—you must reduce it by force or con- iliation. The resort to force would very soon be de- ounced by the North, although so many are anxious for a ray. The North will not consent to a long civil war. A arge portion, much the largest portion of the Republican arty, are reckless now of the crisis before us; and com- romise or concession, though as a means of averting dis- olution, is intolerable to them. They believe that either t will not come at all, or be less disastrous than I think it ill be."

As if to prevent the plain inference, he states his opin- on—but not on this precise point:

"For my own part, I think that we must collect the evenues, regain the forts in the Gulf, and, if need be, main- ain ourselves here; but that every thought that we think ught to be conciliatory, forbearing, and fraternal, and so pen the way for the rising of a Union party in the seced- ng states which will bring them back into the Union."[1]

In the same letter Seward said that he had had an nterview with James Barbour, "the master-spirit of he Union party" in Virginia, who, he suggested, might e available as the southern member of the Cabinet or whom they were seeking. On February 8, 1861, this master-spirit" wrote to Seward that he and other nionists had taken the ground that "secession ought to ollow the extinction of the hope of constitutional mendments. I for one assumed that ground not only s expedient for the canvass, but as right in itself, as did nany others."[2] As early as January 21st the general

[1] 3 Nicolay and Hay, 365, 366.

[2] See Appendix, E.

assembly of Virginia voted unanimously that honor and interest demanded that the state should unite her destiny with the slave-holding states of the South in case the efforts to reconcile the unhappy differences should fail;[1] and other Virginia correspondents, besides Barbour, expressed similar opinions to Seward.[2]

Early in the session Seward became convinced that Congress would not approve a satisfactory compromise amendment.[3] Therefore he concluded that the only practicable course would be to seek a remedy in a constitutional convention. After two-thirds of Congress had favored it, the balance of the work could be done by the states. So when the amendments proposed by the peace conference came before the Senate, and it was

[1] 2 Tyler's *Tylers*, 605.

[2] Although the recollection of a conversation that took place many years before may be unreliable, the following sentences, from a letter dated August 24, 1893, from James Barbour to the author, are worth quoting in connection with the foregoing speculation:

"I told him [Seward, at the interview referred to above] frankly that nothing materially less than the Crittenden compromise would allay it [the excitement] in Virginia. . . . He said, you have asked me if I would favor the Crittenden compromise. I am of your opinion that nothing short of that will allay the excitement, and therefore I will favor it substantially. . . .

"When about to leave Mr. Seward, I told him that I would state the purport of his conversation for publication. He requested me not to do so, as a premature publication of his views would destroy his influence to accomplish his purpose. . . .

"I took Washington in [on] my return trip, and again saw Governor Seward. He then remarked that the contest in Virginia had not been so close as I had expected, and in his opinion we could trust the Union sentiment in Virginia to an indefinite extent. This annoyed me, and I brusquely told him that if he acted on that view our state would secede in thirty days. He said I misunderstood his remark and he still designed to do just as he had formerly told me."

[3] On December 2d, he wrote to Weed: "No amendment that can be proposed, and would be satisfactory, can get two-thirds of both Houses, although just such amendments might pass three-fourths of the states in convention."—2 Seward, 479. See also 488.

nown that there was no prospect of their adoption by onstitutional majorities, Seward offered a joint resolu-on requesting the legislatures of the states to consider ie advisability of asking Congress to call a constitu-onal convention.[1] The definite propositions he offered ere mere feelers, and it was generally understood that ney did not represent all he would concede under favor-ble circumstances. If this was a mistaken inference, e had forced it. When he presented the long petition om New Yorkers, praying for a settlement of the sec-onal question on the basis of the border-state propo-tions—which were very similar to Crittenden's compro-ise, except that the protection of slavery in territory cquired in the future was not promised[2]—he said: "I ave thought it my duty to hold myself open and ready or the best adjustment that could be practically made. . ."[3] On March 2d the Crittenden compromise and me resolutions offered by Senator Clark, of New Hampshire, declaring that the Constitution needed to e obeyed rather than amended, were put to a final test. eward had been present earlier in the day, but he now oted neither for enforcing the Constitution and the ws nor for the compromise.[4] He was, therefore, ractically uncommitted as to any special action, except gainst recognizing secession.[5]

From such evidence it seems fair to conclude that if constitutional convention had met, Seward would ave been morally bound by the logic of his arguments,

[1] *Globe*, 1860-61, 1270. [2] McPherson, 73.
[3] 4 *Works*, 671. [4] *Globe*, 1860-61, 1375, 1404, 1405.
[5] On January 16th, when Clark's resolutions were first brought to a ote, as an amendment to Crittenden's compromise, Seward voted for em. Crittenden's plan was to put his propositions to a popular ote, as a means of indicating to Congress what ought to be done. *Globe*, 1860-61, 237. Seward said subsequently that he had opposed because he regarded the method as "unconstitutional and ineffect-al."—4 *Works*, 678.

by his pleas for the Union, and by his pledges for con cession, to favor either the Crittenden compromise o one substantially the same except in respect to slaver in territory that might be afterward acquired.

In opposition to the correctness of this conclusion several pledges to Mrs. Seward might be cited: De cember 24th, "We have come to no compromise; an we shall not."[1] December 31st, "There is no fear o any compromise of principle or advantage of freedom If there is such an one, which I do not expect, I shal be no party to it."[2] January 13, 1861, "I could no compromise a principle, if I would, for there is nobod to go with me."[3] It is at least suggestive that his wif continued to suspect that he had turned compromiser If he meant to promise that he would favor no propo sition that she then, or he himself a few months be fore, regarded as a compromise, he did not keep hi word. When it was reported that Charles Franci Adams was ready to vote for the admission of Nev Mexico as a slave state, Mrs. Seward wrote to Sumner "Three hundred thousand square miles of God's earth i a high price for the questionable advantage of a unio with the slave states."[5] In the speech of January 12th as has been noticed, Seward indicated his willingnes to favor a division of all the territory, aside from Kan sas, into two states, and admit them without restrictio as to slavery, if provision could be made for their sub division, whenever necessary, into several states.[6] Hi belief that this reservation could not be made const tutionally did not affect the principle. The genera

[1] 2 Seward, 483. [2] *Ibid.*, 489. [3] *Ibid.*, 496.

[4] When Mrs. Seward objected to his "concessions" in the speec of January 12th, he replied: "You will soon enough come to see th they are not compromises, but explanations to disarm enemies Truth, Freedom, and Union of their most effective weapons —2 Seward, 496–97. [5] 4 Pierce, 10. [6] 4 *Works*, 667.

xpectation was that by such a plan New Mexico ould become a slave state, and the northern territory ould be free. Seward's whole argument about slavery the territories was similar to that of the northern Vhig compromisers of 1850, and was entirely inconsist-nt with what he had been saying for the past twelve ears.

But it must always be remembered that Seward's two nmediate objects during these months were to foster ympathy between the loyalists of both sections and to revent a conflict with the Confederates before Lincoln's auguration, and that these objects were of supreme nportance.

No one knew better than he how many unionists in oth sections honestly believed that the Republicans esigned to initiate a revolutionary policy. There never as a day before the surrender at Appomattox when ne Republicans alone could have saved the Union. Be-ause Seward and Weed saw how helpless their party ust remain, they aimed to win for it as much confi-ence and support as possible. "The North is divided," rote Seward, on January 13th. "Two-thirds of the Re-ublican Senators are as reckless in action as the South. hey imagine that the government can go on and con-uer the South, while they, themselves, sit still and see e work done."[1] "The Union cannot be saved by roving that secession is illegal or unconstitutional."[2] he only way in which the North as a whole could be rought to the point of fighting for the preservation of e Union was by making it plain that the Republicans d not provoked the South into secession and that there as still enough loyalty in the border slave states to arrant the expectation of an easy victory over the Con-deracy.[3]

[1] 2 Seward, 496. [2] Speech, January 12th, 4 *Works*, 652.
[3] See M. H. Grinnell to Seward, Appendix B.

But the urgent task was to preclude a violent outbreak during Buchanan's term. The constant aim of the secessionist leaders ever since the election had been to destroy all hope of reconciliation, and when they found the unionists in the border slave states exerting unexpected power, they charged them with being the dupes of the Republicans.[1] And Governor Pickens, of South Carolina, suggested to Toombs, on February 12th, that it would be a good plan to bring on a conflict so as to open a gulf between the southern border states and the North.[2]

On January 23d Seward wrote home: "Once for all, I must gain time for the new administration to organize and for the frenzy of passion to subside."[3] Until the Republicans could command the physical and material strength of the government, any positive offer to compromise would weaken them more than their enemies.[4]

[1] Editorial articles in Semi-Weekly Richmond *Enquirer*, February 19 and 22, 1861, are good illustrations.

[2] Crawford's *Genesis of the Civil War*, 270. [3] 2 Seward, 497.

[4] Six years afterward Seward described his purpose at this time as follows:

"In regard to February, 1861, I need only say, that, at the time the secession leaders were all in the Senate and House, with power enough, and only wanting an excuse, to get up a resistance in the capital to the declaration of Mr. Lincoln's election and to his inauguration—in other words, to have an excuse and opportunity to open the civil war here before the new administration and new Congress could be in authority to subdue it—I desired to avoid giving them that advantage. I conferred throughout with General Scott and Mr Stanton, then in Mr. Buchanan's Cabinet. I presume that I conversed with others in a way that seemed to me best calculated to leave the inauguration of a war to the secessionists, and to delay it, in any case until the new administration should be in possession of the government. It was less military demonstration that was wanted at that particular moment than political discretion.

"Discretion taught two duties—namely, to awaken patriotism at the North, and to get the secessionists, with Buchanan's administration, out of Washington. Mr. Adams well and thoroughly unde

There is no reason to doubt that Seward's policy warded off the most imminent dangers and bridged over the chasm between November and March. No one but Buchanan had the power — and he wholly lacked the capacity and the courage — to develop a better and more far-reaching method of dealing with secession. What Seward did was less a deliberate policy than tactics for an emergency, but it was timely and effective for the immediate purpose, and amazingly so when all the difficulties are given due consideration. This was the hour of Seward's supreme greatness.

Seward's self-conscious bearing at this time has been much criticised; and it has been alleged that he imagined himself another Atlas on whose shoulders rested the whole weight of the Union. He assumed, as has been noticed, "a sort of dictatorship for defence"; and he wrote home, January 18, 1861: "It seems to me that if I am absent only three days, this administration, the Congress, and the District, would fall into consternation and despair. I am the only *hopeful*, *calm*, *conciliatory* person here."[1] At that time the Senators from Florida, Alabama, and Mississippi were about to withdraw from the Senate, and Georgia was hourly expected to pass her ordinance of secession. One needs

stood me. On the 22d of February, in concert with Mr. Stanton, I caused the United States flag to be displayed throughout the northern and western portions of the United States."—Seward to William Schouler, June 13, 1867. 1 Schouler's *Massachusetts in the Civil War*, 41, 42.

The *Evening Journal* of February 14, 1861, said that if the peace conference did nothing else, it had shown "that northern states do not regard southern ones as enemies, and by securing what is of the first importance in all this business—time for the excitement to cool, and for the madness of secession to be realized. . . . The only objection that can be raised to either of these [methods of changing the constitution] is, that it requires time and prevents 'precipitation into revolution.' This is precisely why we commend it."

[1] 2 Seward, 497.

but to read the records of the proceedings in the Senate three or four days later, after these Senators had departed, to see how easily consternation and despair might have prevailed if Seward had not been there to insist with serene assurance on proceeding with the regular business and to oppose entering into an exciting and futile debate, which some of the secessionists tried to stir up. On January 23d he again wrote to Mrs. Seward: "Mad men North, and mad men South, are working together to produce a dissolution of the Union by civil war. The present administration and the incoming one unite in devolving on me the responsibility of averting those disasters. My own party trusts me, but not without reservation. All the other parties, North and South, cast themselves upon me."[1] Great as his egotism appears, it was not out of proportion to his superiority and responsibility at the time. And his intimacy with Lincoln during these months fully warranted the statement about the incoming administration.[2]

On December 8, 1860, Lincoln began the definite selection of his Cabinet by inviting Seward to be Secretary of State. The newspapers had circulated a rumor to the effect that the offer was to be tendered merely as a compliment, with the expectation that it would be declined. Lincoln informed Seward that the rumor was groundless, and with characteristic frankness made this handsome acknowledgment: "I now offer you the place in the hope that you will accept it, and with the belief that your position in the public eye, your integrity, ability, learning, and great experience, all combine

[1] 2 Seward, 497.

[2] To no one else did Lincoln write so many important letters during this period (see 1 Lincoln's *Works*, 653 ff.), and Seward seems to have had no extensive correspondence with any one besides Lincoln excepting Mrs. Seward and Thurlow Weed.

o render it an appointment pre-eminently fit to be nade."[1] No proposition could have been less a sur-prise to Seward, but he knew the wisdom of asking for ime to reflect.[2] As it was impracticable for Seward nd Lincoln to meet at this time, Weed soon went to Springfield. When he returned he brought Lincoln's nemorandum suggesting what concessions the Republi-ans might make, and a request that Seward should vrite to him about the status in Washington.[3] On the 6th of December Seward sent Lincoln an elaborate tatement about political affairs, and two days later he ormally accepted the proffered secretaryship.[4] When he acceptance became public, early in January, Lincoln aid Seward this high compliment: "Your selection for he State Department having become public, I am happy o find scarcely any objection to it. I shall have trouble vith every other northern Cabinet appointment, so much o that I shall have to defer them as long as possible, to void being teased to insanity to make changes."[5]

Seward was anxious to have in the Cabinet one or nore southern unionists that had not been identified vith the Republican party, and he suggested the names f John A. Gilmer and Kenneth Raynor, of North Car-lina, Robert E. Scott and James Barbour, of Virginia, Randall Hunt, of Louisiana, and Meredith P. Gentry, of

[1] 1 Lincoln's *Works*, 657.

[2] On December 13th he replied to Lincoln: "You will readily be-eve that, coming to the consideration of so grave a subject all at once, I eed a little time to consider whether I possess the qualifications and mper of a minister, and whether it is in such a capacity that my iends would wish that I should act if I am to continue at all in the ublic service. These questions are, moreover, to be considered in ew of a very anomalous condition of public affairs. I wish, indeed, at a conference with you upon them were possible."—3 Nicolay and ay, 350. The same day he wrote to Weed: "I have now the oc-sion for consulting you that you have expected."—2 Seward, 481.

[3] Seward, 484.

[4] 2 Seward, 484, 485, 487.

[5] 1 Lincoln's *Works*, 665.

Tennessee.[1] When Weed insisted that some of the southern unionists could be trusted, although their states might secede, Lincoln said, "Well, let us have the names of your white crows, such ones as you think fit for the Cabinet."[2] Seward was expected to consult some of the Southerners named; but no practical arrangement could be made with any of them. Doubtless each was found to be "too exacting for his section," as Seward said was the case with Robert E. Scott.[3] Lincoln never had any confidence that the plan was feasible.

Seward's fears lest violence might break out in Washington before the inauguration caused him to recommend that Lincoln appear somewhat earlier than the public would expect.[4] But Lincoln thought it better to wait until after the result of the electoral count should be announced.[5] General Scott and Seward had become convinced, after causing three New York detectives to investigate the rumors, that there was a plot to attack Lincoln during his passage through Baltimore. Therefore, Lincoln consented to take an earlier train so as to get through that city before the public heard of his change of plan. Seward met Lincoln at the station in Washington, and during the next few days they were together much of the time. He introduced Lincoln to the President, the members of the Cabinet, and General Scott, and escorted him into each house of Congress.[6] Lincoln drove and dined with Seward the first day he was in Washington, and on the following day they appeared together at church.[7] "He is very cordial and kind toward me—simple, natural, and agreeable," Seward wrote home before Lincoln had been in the capital twenty-four hours.

[1] 3 Nicolay and Hay, 362–65.
[2] 1 *Weed*, 606.
[3] 3 Nicolay and Hay, 365.
[4] 2 Seward, 486, 487.
[5] 3 Nicolay and Hay, 363.
[6] *National Intelligencer*, February 26, 1861.
[7] 2 Seward, 511.

What Lincoln had said about deferring Cabinet appointments as long as possible to avoid being teased into insanity to make changes was one of the early illustrations of his foresight. When he arrived in Washington but one other department-chief besides Seward had been positively chosen. This was Edward Bates, the future Attorney-General. Lincoln had almost decided to nominate Chase as Secretary of the Treasury, Caleb B. Smith, of Indiana, as Secretary of the Interior, Gideon Welles, of Connecticut, as Secretary of the Navy, Simon Cameron as Secretary of War, and Montgomery Blair, of Maryland, as Postmaster-General. There was then most doubt about appointing Cameron and Blair. In a general way, the friends of the aspirants finally became associated with either the Seward or the Chase faction. The Seward men expected the new administration to be conducted along the lines of the policy advocated by their idol. Chase's friends counted among their number most of Seward's enemies of 1860 and the radical Republicans, some of whom believed in recognizing secession as a fact, while others favored coercion. There was considerable personal antipathy between the two branches of the party, but the antagonism was essentially legitimate because it grew out of two distinct theories as to future action.

Shortly after the election William Cullen Bryant urged Lincoln to make Chase Secretary of State; and when Seward's selection became known he again praised Chase's qualities, and spoke of "the need of his presence here [in the Cabinet] as a counterpoise to the one who runs to commanding talents a flexible and indulgent temper of mind and unsafe associations."[1] The old hostility to Seward was made sharper, especially in New York, because Seward and Weed had lately prevented

[1] 2 Godwin's *Bryant*, 150.

the election of Greeley as United States Senator. Dur
ing the month of February the *Tribune* and the *Evenin*
Post assailed Seward with unwonted virulence. Th
criticism became so exasperating that Weed declare
that the assailants "were ready to dissolve the Unio
destroy the government, and bankrupt and ruin the pe
ple to keep Seward out of the Cabinet and secure fo
themselves and their adherents the 'spoils of office.'"
After Lincoln's arrival, Greeley and other Chase me
came to Washington to press their opinions with mo
force. The leaders of the Seward faction were at firs
less public and direct in their opposition to Chase an
the candidates likely to act with him. Seward's prestig
and his intimacy with Lincoln were expected to give h
friends an advantage, but during the last days of Febr
ary they became alarmed on finding that Seward's infl
ence over Lincoln was less and Chase's greater than the
had supposed. Rumors to the effect that Lincoln ha
been unable to harmonize the two factions led some
Seward's too zealous supporters into a desperate mov
ment, not merely as a means of excluding Chase, but
making sure that Seward himself should be retained

[1] *Evening Journal*, February 25, 1861.

[2] "It [the Republican party] seems to care a great deal more abo
getting Seward out of the Cabinet than anything else just no
Lincoln is a 'Simple Susan,' and the men who fought a week at C
cago to nominate him have probably got their labor for their pai
But no matter—Seward is a necessity; Chase or Banks ought to
and really are, if the machine is to run its four years; but let t
New-Yorker with his Illinois attachment have a fair trial."—Bow
to H. L. Dawes, February 26, 1861. 1 Merriam's *Bowles*, 318.

"Later on in the evening —— came over and sat by me to u
me to go with him to-morrow to see Mr. Lincoln in regard to
Cabinet appointments. He was much agitated and concerned abo
them, having gotten [it] into his head, for reasons which he gave n
that Mr. Lincoln, in his despair of harmonizing the Seward men w
the Chase men, has concocted or had concocted for him a plan
putting Corwin into the State Department, sending Seward to E

incoln seemed determined to have Montgomery Blair, resolute coercionist, nominated in place of Henry Winter Davis, a protégé of Weed and Seward. This ıade it all the more urgent that Seward should either ırrender his expectations of controlling the policy of ıe administration, or else force Lincoln to give up hase. A party of Seward's friends ventured, on March d, to inform the President-elect that Seward could ot serve in the Cabinet with Chase.[1] On the same

nd, and giving the Treasury to New York. . . . He showed me a tter he had received a fortnight ago from Mr. Draper, in New ork, expressing great anxiety as to Mr. Seward's position in the abinet in case of the nomination of Mr. Chase, and intimating an tention of visiting Washington with several other gentlemen for e purpose of making Mr. Lincoln understand that he must absolutely op the idea of putting Mr. Chase into the Treasury. I told him at Mr. Weed had to-day expressed the same ideas to me, and I ked him if he did not know that a counter-pressure was putting on r. Lincoln to exclude Mr. Seward. 'Suppose,' I said, 'they should th be excluded?'"—"Diary of a Public Man," entry of February , 1861; 129 *North American Review*, 262, 263.

The fact that the authorship of this "Diary" has been kept a pro-ınd secret might seem to exclude it from the field of trustworthy idence; but its tone, accuracy, and scope indicate that it was written a man influential in public affairs and an intimate friend of Seward.

[1] Lamon's *Recollections*, 49–51. "Mr. Lincoln makes his own Cab-et. There can be no doubt about it any longer. This man from inois is not in the hands of Mr. Seward. Heaven grant that he may t be in other hands—not to be thought of with patience! These ew York men have done just what they have been saying they ould do, and with just the result which I have from the first ex-cted; though I own there are points in the upshot which puzzle . I cannot feel even sure now that Mr. Seward will be nominated all on Tuesday; and certainly he neither is nor after this can be the l head of the administration, even if his name is on the list of the binet. Such folly on the part of those who assume to be the ecial friends of the one man in whose ability and moderation the nservative people of the North have most confidence; and such folly this moment might almost make one despair of the republic!" The rist then gives a long and interesting account of the report of one Seward's friends who was in the party of politicians that had just

day Seward asked permission of Lincoln to withdra his acceptance of the secretaryship. Seward's beli was that he alone could safely direct the next a ministration, and therefore there must be at least majority of the Cabinet in sympathy with his idea Lincoln had given Seward first place as a counsello but he had no intention of allowing the great Ne Yorker to dictate to him. It was about this tim that he indicated his impatience of the attitude the Seward-champions, by remarking that if th "slate" should break again, it would "break at th top"; that is, Seward would be left off it.[1] But h sober second thought told him that the hostility b tween Seward's followers and those of Chase woul be less harmful if their chiefs were in the Cabine and, furthermore, the only way to control Seward—t prevent him from taking the first trick, as Lincoln e pressed it[2]—was to insist on his becoming Secretary State. So on the morning before the inauguratio Lincoln wrote to him: "It is the subject of the mo painful solicitude with me; and I feel constrained beg that you will countermand the withdrawal. Th public interest, I think, demands that you should; an my personal feelings are deeply enlisted in the sam direction."[3] That afternoon Seward had a long confe ence with the new President, and on the following da the letter of March 2d was formally withdrawn. T

called on Lincoln "to bring matters to a head, and prevent the nom nation of Chase at all hazards." They practically told Lincoln th Seward would not sit in the same Cabinet with Chase. Linc seemed much distressed by the prospect. Finally, he filled his call with consternation by asking them how it would do to give the Tre ury to Mr. Chase, the State Department to William L. Dayton, a let Seward go as Minister to England!—"Diary," etc., entry March 2, 1861, 129 *North American Review*, 271–73. See also Well *Lincoln and Seward*, 36.

[1] 3 Nicolay and Hay, 370

[2] 3 Nicolay and Hay, 371.

[3] 3 Nicolay and Hay, 371

ident was closed. But Seward seemed not to realize e significance of what had taken place, for a letter itten a few days later contained these sentences:

"The President is determined that he will have a com- und Cabinet, and that it shall be peaceful, and even rmanent. I was at one time on the point of refusing— y, I did refuse, for a time, to hazard myself in the experi- ent. But a distracted country appeared before me, and withdrew from that position. I believe I can endure as uch as any one; and may be I can endure enough to ke the experiment successful. At all events, I did not re to go home, or to England, and leave the country to ance."[1]

[1] 2 Seward, 518.

CHAPTER XXVI

SEWARD'S OPINIONS ON THE TARIFF, PUBLIC LANDS, I TERNAL IMPROVEMENTS, SUBSIDIES, COMMERCE, ETC.

SEWARD'S prominence in antislavery politics and i diplomacy has caused his opinions on other questions t be overlooked. In mental qualities, education, and e perience he ranked high among the Senators best fitte for the serious business of legislation.

His career in New York had indicated that he was stanch federalist and protectionist. He believed th one of the chief functions of government was direct to stimulate national development by legislation. Th principal support of such a system must be a high ta iff, for in no other way can the necessary revenu be obtained. He maintained that where there we many resources, but where industry was applied to on a few staples, three great interests were neglected: nat ral resources were unimproved; labor was unemploye and internal exchanges, which a diversity of indust would render necessary, were undeveloped. He he that foreign commerce, based on a narrow system of pr duction, compelled a nation to sell its staples at pric reduced by competition in foreign markets, and to b fabrics at prices established by monopoly in the sa markets. The application of industry to a large numb of objects rested upon these "impregnable grounds, vi first, that the use of indigenous materials does not minish, but on the contrary increases, the public wealt second, that society is constituted so that individu

oluntarily classify themselves in all, and not in a few, epartments of industry, by reason of a distributive con-eniality of tastes and adaptation of powers; and that hile labor so distributed is more profitable, the general ntentment and independence of the people are secured nd preserved, and their enterprise is stimulated and sus-ined."[1] He held that it ought not to be less profita-e to supply ourselves from our own resources with pper, iron, glass, and paper than with flour, sugar, and ld. If mining and manufacturing were profitable in ngland, they could be made so here. To the objection at labor was cheaper in that country, he replied: "Yes, ecause you leave it there. If you offer inducements, it ill come here just as freely as agricultural labor now mes. The ocean is reduced to a ferry." In his opin-n the theory that the encouragement given to the in-stry of one class of citizens is partial, and is injurious that of other classes, could not in any just sense be true, since the prosperity and vigor of each class depend in great degree on the prosperity and vigor of all the in-strial classes. But all experience shows that if gov-nment do not favor domestic enterprise, its negative licy will benefit some foreign monopoly, which, of all asses of legislation, is most injurious and least ex-sable."[2]

In 1853, when one of the appropriation bills was der consideration, Mason, of Virginia, offered an endment to repeal the duty on iron imported for ils to be laid upon railroads in the United States. ouglas desired to have the duty abolished for three ars.[3] Hale estimated, without being contradicted, at only about one-tenth of the railroad iron used in e United States was manufactured in this country;

[1] 4 *Works*, 154, 155.

[2] 4 *Works*, 156, 157.

[3] *Globe*, 1852–53, 906.

that a duty of three million seven hundred thousand dollars would be paid in order to benefit our few furnaces one-tenth of that amount; and, therefore, that railroad building was taxed nearly four million dollars merely in their interest.'

Seward defined his position with startling frankness. "Sir, I have voted land by the square league across the continent, and twenty millions of dollars out of the public treasury for railroads. I will not vote one dollar out of the iron mines of my country, at the cost of the owner, and of the miner who is engaged in drawing its wealth to the surface."[2] This seemed somewhat inconsistent, but it was not so for a sincere protectionist. Seward fully understood the practical importance of all protectionists standing together:

"We know that it [protection] requires the co-operation the concerted action of all the industrial classes, and of capitalists of every description, to adjust and render equal to procure the establishment of a system of imposts, with any view whatever, direct or indirect, to the protection and encouragement of American industry." . . .

"Mr. President, the whole manufacturing interest of the country is in danger; and it is in danger because we, who are its friends, are demoralized and divided." . . . "In the very next session of Congress they will come with arguments equally insidious, and equally forcible, and then the manufacturers of Lowell may look to the safety of their spindles, and the sugar and the cotton-growers of the South may look to the safety of their sugar and their cotton fields; and the wheat-grower of Maryland, and the corn grower of Ohio and Illinois, may look to the safety of their special interests."[3]

Of free-trade he said:

"I can understand the proposition of *free-trade*. It is an intelligible theory, and at some future period down the vista of years, it is probable that the world will come to understand that universal *free-trade* is the wisest and most

[1] *Globe*, 1852–53, 910. [2] 3 *Works*, 667. [3] 3 *Works*, 633.

neficent system of fiscal administration for any governent and for all governments; and so far as that forms e principle on which this measure proceeds, I hail the inoduction of it here. But free-trade involves not one ly but two principles, not only absence of imports, but rect taxation to support the government. I call, then, on those who support this measure of free-trade to dend it upon that principle—to carry it out on that prinple, by bringing in a bill for direct taxation to an extent hich will replace revenues surrendered."[1]

owever, Seward in 1854 voted for the reciprocity treaty th Canada, which was a liberal measure.[2]

The exigencies that compelled the revision of the riff in 1857 were not such as to bring into bold conast the principles of protection and free-trade. The riff of 1846 had so encouraged importations that there as a surplus of about twenty millions of dollars in ld in the treasury. This growing surplus both invited travagant appropriations and seriously lessened the lume of currency in circulation. The first aim, therere, was to reduce the revenue. Two means were prosed. The House bill was designed to decrease the come of the government chiefly by transferring to the ee list articles not produced here or that were necesry to our manufactures. This left the tariff on artis coming into competition with American products; d to that extent it recognized the principle of protecon. The Senate amendment proposed what is popurly called a horizontal reduction on most articles and free entry for those demanded only by manufacturers. his, it was held, would preserve and extend the freede principle.[3] Seward naturally preferred the House l, for he was opposed to reducing the duty on raw terials produced here, such as iron and wool.

[1] 3 *Works*, 659.

[2] 4 *Works*, 30.

[3] *Globe*, 1856–57, Apdx., 328 ff.

"I think," he said, "the reduction of the revenue is i itself subordinate in importance to the stability of the in dustry of the country. The inconvenience of having to full a treasury is only a consequence of the greater publi inconvenience of importing from other countries man things which ought to be produced at home. I, therefore want a measure which, while it effects a reduction of th revenue, will be sure also to reduce imports."[1]

Principally as a result of the financial crisis of 185 the tariff law enacted that year had not yielded a suf cient revenue. The Morrill tariff of 1861 was designed t supply the deficit. Under the tariffs of 1846 and 185 there was a liberal warehouse system, so that impor ed goods might lie in bond a considerable time befor the payment of duty. The House bill proposed to r duce this period to so short a time as practically to d away with the credit feature. The Senate committe desired to increase the time from thirty to ninety day Seward wished to make it three years.[2] The inlan protectionists, like Simon Cameron, naturally looke upon such a plan as protection for importers and foreig manufacturers and as the withholding from the Unite States treasury of many millions.[3] Seward's constituenc in New York city and his experience on the commi tee on commerce had kept him free from the commo prejudices against international exchanges where the did not directly conflict with important domestic inte ests. This was the only point in the debate that l defended with persistency and special skill. He an his colleague, Preston King, and Sumner voted again their Republican associates, and the Senate approve Seward's amendment. He also made an effort—b an unsuccessful one—to reduce the tariff on books an printed literature from fifteen to ten per cent., urgin

[1] *Globe*, 1856–57, Apdx., 345. [2] *Globe*, 1860–61, 948.
[3] *Globe*, 1860–61, 930.

at that would be "quite enough to levy on knowledge
d literature."[1]

Nearly three-fourths of the four million square miles
national area had been in the possession of the Federal
vernment, subject to the control and disposal of Con-
ess. The public lands were so vast that for more than
lf a century our legislators seemed to believe that the
pply could never be exhausted. They were sold at
minal prices, distributed as bounties for military ser-
e, and donated to the new states by the hundred
ousand acres for purposes of internal improvement,
ucation, and charity.[2] The westward flow of the
pulation was greatly accelerated by the discovery of
ld in California and by the acquisitions from Mexico.
e schemes for obtaining public land soon became
untless. West of the Ohio river many persons be-
ved that every one that wanted land should be given
for the asking, and the new states set up a clamor
ainst the Federal government retaining control over
ds within their borders. The revenue from the sale
the public lands was not needed by the United States
asury, but a majority in Congress could not be ob-
ned for its distribution among the states. However,
ny of the Democrats agreed with the Whigs that the
nstitution gave Congress absolute control over the
blic domain. The popular demand for a spendthrift
licy of distribution, and the political advantages to be
ined by the advocates of such a policy, soon became too
at to be resisted. As late as 1850 Seward estimated
t there still remained seventeen hundred million acres
the public domain.[3] No wonder that the most sober
islators and the most clever politicians were over-
wing with opinions on the great land question.[4]

[1] *Globe*, 1860–61, 987. [2] *Globe*, 1850–51, 742. [3] 1 *Works*, 293.
[4] In 1851, Dawson, of Georgia, told the Senate, that the public lands

Seward's theories about the functions of the Feder government indicated that he would be hampered b no constitutional objections. Months before the Hu garian revolution had failed, thousands of the spirite Magyars had come to the United States to seek home. On January 9, 1850, Seward presented to th Senate a resolution denouncing the "injustice, ba barity, and oppression" which Austria and Russia ha practised toward Hungary, and requesting the commi tee on public lands "to inquire and report on the pr priety of setting apart a portion of the public domai to be granted, free from all charges, to the exiles Hungary already arrived, and hereafter to arrive, in th United States, as well as to the exiles fleeing from o pression in other European countries."[1] Subsequent Foote, of Mississippi, characterized the different pro ositions before the Senate for the disposition of publ land as "bids" for popularity; and the way in whi Senators laughed and joked about the remark indicat that others held similar opinions.[2] Douglas charg Seward with giving the foreign-born resident an adva tage over the native American; and Dawson, of Georgi called Seward's plan "constituting our public doma into a great national charity fund."[3] Seward practical admitted Dawson's charge, and replied to Douglas saying that he would gladly vote for any other propo tion placing the immigrant and the native on an equ footing. He suggested that if the foreigner was given preference it was because his "liberties had been clov

were "made a mere battledoor for political purposes; and any m who has any aspirations to the highest office in the gift of the peo of this country makes it his business to form his platforms upon public lands, and the rights and interests of the states are made s servient to the personal aspirations of individuals." . . . "This is tr and should be known; and I am prepared to tell it boldly."—*Gl* 1850–51, 743.

[1] *Globe*, 1849–50, 128

[2] *Globe*, 1849–50, 262, 263.

[3] *Globe*, 1849–50, 264

wn," because he had been deprived of his home, and d sought this land of liberty as an asylum.[1] More- er, he was so friendly toward immigrants that he was favor of receiving all classes, and would support "an nelioration of the laws of naturalization, so as to give vote to any man of any country on his becoming per- anently domiciled among us."[2]

In September, 1850, he favored a bill for surveying regon and making donations of the public lands to ttlers. He desired that immigrants that had declared eir intentions to become citizens should have the same ivileges as native Americans.[3] A few days later, nen the Senate was considering a measure to grant izens certain mining privileges on the public lands in lifornia, he moved to amend it so as to include immi- ants, as in the bill relating to Oregon.[4] Dawson pro- sted that this would throw open the gold mines to the nole world;[5] and both of the California Senators, Fré- ont and Gwin, feared that the passage of such an nendment would cause their state to be overrun by the lf-civilized Mexicans, while Gwin believed that many exicans would bring their peons with them.[6] Seward nsidered that "distinctions between races and castes e vices in any constitution of government," and he ntured the prophecy "that if we now refuse to dis- minate in California in favor of those who are already izens and those who are in the process of becoming , we shall happily crush in the bud that principle of ative-Americanism which, if allowed to ripen, would

[1] *Globe*, 1849–50, 264.

[2] *Ibid.*, 267. This phrase was changed so that in his *Works* it reads: "he melioration of the laws of naturalization, which put a period five years and an oath in the way of any man of any country in be- ning a citizen, which raises a barrier between ourselves and those o cast their lot amongst us."—1 *Works*, 295.

[3] 1 *Works*, 322, 323.

[4] 1 *Works*, 323-27.

[5] *Globe*, 1849–50, Apdx., 1365.

[6] *Ibid.*, 1366, 1367.

there, as elsewhere, produce only bitter fruits."[1] H could see no difference between the giving of farmin privileges and the granting of mining concessions t immigrants. "The policy is the same in both cases; i is to cover the earth with population as fast as poss ble, and to distribute the wealth acquired as broadly a possible." He advocated the measure because he "re garded the interests of the whole American family a demanding the practice of not only the largest civi liberty, but also the opening of the door to the privilege of citizenship widely and freely to all who may desir to enter." Foote, in another of his personal outbursts charged that Seward could have advocated such doc trines only "for the purpose of bolstering up the to tering pretensions to presidential advancement."[2]

The objection to Spanish-Americans was so strong tha Senator Dodge, of Iowa, offered a further amendmen conferring the proposed privileges on immigrants fro Europe only.[3] This, it should be noticed, excluded thos from Canada and all other parts of this continent, fro Australia and other sections of the globe inhabited b European races. But few save Europeans had becom citizens—and voters. Seward supported Dodge's amend ment, without making any explanations.[4]

In February, 1851, a bill proposing to release t Louisiana all the public lands within her borders, to en able her to improve the navigation of the Mississipp was under consideration. Seward favored it, and in carefully prepared speech explained his theories as t the best way to deal with the public domain in general The strongest objections to the gratuitous distribution o the lands or their relinquishment to the states in whic they lay, were that they had cost the nation millions o

[1] 1 *Works*, 324.
[2] *Globe*, 1849–50, Apdx., 1366.
[3] *Ibid.*, 1367.
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] 1 *Works*, 156–71.

ollars, and that they were a proper and important ource of revenue. In order to overcome these objec-ons, Seward urged such considerations as these: that the property *given* would remain with the *giver after* ie gift, and would be enhanced in usefulness by the ift"; that, if against all the cost of the public lands we ut "all the national benefits—financial, commercial, and olitical—which have been secured, the domain would e discharged from all indebtedness whatever to the easury"; that the value of the public land "is what it worth now, not what it cost." Because the govern-ent had disposed of so many million acres in recent ears, which were still unoccupied and in the market, it as estimated that it would be from eight to sixteen years efore the public lands would again be a source of any onsiderable profit. "The domain no longer yields, nor ill ever again yield, a revenue."[1] He further main-ined that we had only a temporary jurisdiction and a mporary estate in the public lands; that the reversion elonged to the states; and that until that reversion ad taken place, the domain would not begin to contrib-e to the wealth and strength of the whole republic.[2] He overlooked the facts that the lands could only e made valuable by actual settlement; that whether vned by the states or the nation the demand for em by settlers would not be greatly affected, for e tendencies and numbers of the population would ot be specially influenced; that if the states made ratuitous grants, then there would be no revenues om them with which to "construct channels of trade d to found systems of education," of which Seward as dreaming;[3] that if the states should realize nall or great returns from them at any time—and eward expected the latter—then it must be because

[1] 1 *Works*, 164-66. [2] 1 *Works*, 168. [3] *Ibid.*, 169.

the lands, which the government was urged to surren
der as worthless, had value. Furthermore, Seward wa
mistaken as to his estimate of future revenue. As
fact, for the next eight years the public lands yielde
over forty-one million dollars.[1]

From his experiences in connection with the lan
company in New York, he had gained valuable knowl
edge about the importance of small possessions o
land by individuals, and the keeping of the homestea
free from seizure by creditors. His influence in thes
respects was thoroughly good. But in regard to th
disposal of the national estate his reasoning was ofte
unsound. He seemed to be infatuated with the no
tion that the public lands should be got rid of in th
shortest possible time. His manner and restless activit
remind one of a bustling land-agent rather than of
sober and far-seeing statesman, who remembers tha
there are to be future generations and increased mil
ions to be cared for in other centuries. At first he fa
vored the appropriation of the revenues from the sal
of the public lands to the use of the states. Then h
unsuccessfully attempted to have the lands within th
states given to them outright. So the nearest he coul
come to realizing his wishes was to favor every mea
ure asking for public lands for any purpose that claime
to be connected with internal improvements, educatio
or charity. It should not be inferred that these idea
were peculiar to Seward. Many others were influence
by the current of popular opinion; but his federalisti
principles, his ambition, and his prominence in his part
compelled him to be first and most extreme in this fie
as in others, or to forego the popularity to be won.

There was one important advantage to be gained b
the speedy settlement of as much as possible of the pu

[1] 3 Lalor's *Cyclopædia*, 478.

domain—most of which had a climate unfavorable to
avery—and that was the development of the power of
e North, which would make disunion more and more
fficult. Seward and the southern leaders foresaw this,
d it had considerable influence upon their respective
tions. He would have been glad, as has been noticed,
use the public lands to pay for "the gradual but
rtain removal of slavery, by a scheme of compensat-
g emancipation."[1] But there was no public senti-
ent favorable to such a suggestion.

Seward's opinions regarding internal improvements
sembled those on the tariff and the public lands. The
an of making moderate grants of lands to the states
r the purposes of highways and canals was departed
om in 1850. In that year Douglas, although theoreti-
lly a strict constructionist, pushed through Congress a
l ceding to the states of Illinois, Mississippi, and Ala-
ma about two and a half million acres of land for
e purpose of building the Illinois Central and the
obile and Ohio railroads.[2] The measure received Sew-
d's enthusiastic support.[3] He saw no constitutional
jections to the construction of roads of any kind that
ould serve for great national objects. As a country
d need of great highways and canals before private
pital could build them, and as the new states, unlike
e old, did not possess the resource of public lands,

he government owes it to itself, and to the states, to
ake liberal, and at the same time judicious, appropria-
ons, to extend its net-work of railroads and canals over
ese new regions, where the people and the government
e unable to construct the work themselves. And, if
ere were any apparent fallacy in this argument, I think I
ould nevertheless be convinced of its soundness by the

[1] 1 *Works*, 167.
[2] *Globe*, 1849–50, 844–45; Cutts's *Douglas*, 187–99; 2 Lalor's *Cyclo-
dia*, 572.
[3] 1 *Works*, 302–307.

fact that all the new states which have undertaken to con
struct these necessary thoroughfares — necessary not onl
for themselves but for the whole country; necessary fo
the welfare and prosperity and even for the existence o
the Union—have all found themselves embarrassed an
crippled, and many of them rendered bankrupt, by the at
tempt to accomplish objects which they were unable to ac
complish, and which the Federal government had ampl
power to carry into effect."[1]

From this time forward bills of similar character, bu
not calling for such enormous amounts, became very nu
merous. In 1854, when many of them were before th
Senate, Seward said: "I have always voted for ever
one of these bills, though I have no personal interest i
them."[2]

In his political career there was no public projec
that he cherished so persistently as that of building
with the assistance of the Federal government, a rai
road to the Pacific ocean. During the first year of hi
senatorship he promised to aid it,[3] and nearly twelv
years later he said that it had been "the first, chiefes
and best of all the measures" he could support whil
remaining in the public service.[4] From the beginnin
of 1854 he was a member of the special committee o
a Pacific railroad, and he was the ablest and mos
strenuous advocate of whatever measure seemed likel
to win a majority in Congress. Many members in eac
house had "constitutional" objections to giving gover
mental support to a project unless they could be assure
that the road would be so located as to be a speci
benefit to their respective states. A majority could no
be obtained for one road, but it seemed likely that
bill providing for three, in different localities, might b
passed. A large number of Congressmen were willin

[1] 1 *Works*, 305.
[2] *Globe*, 1853–54, 409.
[3] 3 *Works*, 424, 425.
[4] *Globe*, 1860–61, 250.

vote for the necessary appropriations, but they were posed to making the railroad a governmental enterise.

It was decidedly to Seward's credit that he looked th disfavor upon the lavish and probably impossible og-rolling" scheme of constructing three railroads to e Pacific. At the same time he admitted: "It is the ry extraordinary extension of that [the railroad] sysm, indeed, which has, to a great extent, produced the esent depression in the country."[1] While he thought e building of a Pacific railroad so urgent as to make e adoption of any special plan secondary in impornce, he had very clear ideas about the advantages of a rthern route "in continuation of the northwestern ack of the emigration which has been pursued from e time when the navigation of the great lakes was ened." . . . "I would directly employ the capital and edit of the United States, increasing the revenues of e United States from commerce for the purpose of fraying the cost, and establishing, at the same time, sinking fund which should, within a reasonable riod, absorb the public debt thus created. And I ould surrender the public lands in the vicinity of e road to actual settlers for cultivation, so as to cure the speediest possible production of revenue from "[2]

Believing a Pacific railroad to be essential to the fety of the Union, the matter of appropriating fifty a hundred million dollars, or of pledging ten millions year for maintaining the system, seemed to him to comparatively insignificant. "It is necessary; and, ce it is necessary, there is an end of the argument." his opinion it had the same claims upon the United ates treasury as the postal system and the main-

[1] *Globe*, 1854–55, 750.

[2] *Globe*, 1858–59, 157.

tenance of the army and the navy; and if it could no otherwise be built, there should be retrenchment i these departments.[1]

Year after year he begged Senators to stop quibblin and to come to a vote. He repeatedly urged that i was folly to think of a foreign war or to negotiat treaties for routes across Central America until we ha done what was possible to make one people of the in habitants of the East and of the West. In the winte of 1858–59, when there were many indications that th Democrats were in search of a foreign war as the bes way to retrieve the fortunes of their party, Sewar pleaded for his enterprise as "a peaceful direction o the activity of the nation. Peaceful activity is safer it is cheaper; it is surer; it saves all the elements o national strength and national power, and increase them."[2] Again, in January, 1861, when the Union wa about to be rent in twain, he begged the Senate t appropriate ninety-six million dollars for the buildin of a northern and a southern railway to the Pacifi insisting that the measure was one "of conciliation, o pacification, of compromise, and of union."[3] A fe days later, after several southern Senators had mad their valedictories, he tried to lay aside the dispute question as to their resignations, so that he might brin the Pacific railroad bill to a vote.[4] Although Congre did not settle upon a plan until a year after Sewar had become Secretary of State, he lived to see the co pletion of the leading features of the great enterprise.

Long before 1850 the custom of making appropri

[1] *Globe*, 1858–59, 158. In his zeal he called it "the realization what all Europe has been striving for for the last four hundred years for it made practical the expectations of a discovery of a weste passage from Europe to the shores of Cathay.—*Globe*, 1857–58, 158

[2] *Globe*, 1858–59, 159.

[3] *Globe*, 1860–61, 250.

[4] *Globe*, 1860–61, 505.

ons for the improvement of the navigation of rivers
id harbors had become well established. Many of
ie strict constructionists still believed that the Consti-
ition had not given Congress the right to make such
nprovements within the states; but as in the case of
nd appropriations for railroads, Democratic Congress-
en of any state to be especially benefited were gen-
ally ready to vote with the Whigs or the Republicans.
eward was so confident that Congress had this power
at he seems never to have considered it worth while
undertake its defence. A careful search of the *Globe*
uring the years when he was Senator has not revealed
ny evidence that he ever objected to any item in any
ver and harbor bill, even where there was a large
ppropriation for deepening some little river, creek, or
ve, as was often the case. He frequently had the
anagement of these bills when before the Senate, and
pursued almost the same policy as in his efforts to
omote the distribution of the public lands. He fa-
red granting the utmost that anybody would pro-
se, but he would accept what could be obtained: "I
efer internal improvements somehow to internal im-
ovements nohow; I prefer internal improvements any
ay to a defeat and subversion of the system."[1]

The self-confidence resulting from the rapid growth
population and riches had inspired the United States
th a desire to rival the greatest of maritime nations.
ngland began to subsidize the Cunard steamers as early
1839. Two years later, Thomas Butler King, of Geor-
a, urged that the United States should adopt a like
stem. In 1847 a line of steamers, aided by our na-
nal treasury, began to ply between New York and
emen. Shortly afterward provision was made for

[1] *Globe*, 1854–55, 661.

other lines. Edward K. Collins agreed to build five fas ships, suitable for use by the government in time of war which should make twenty round trips per annum be tween New York and Liverpool, and carry the Unite States mail for three hundred and eighty-five thousan dollars a year for ten years. In 1852 the United State wanted the number of trips increased to twenty-six, bu the Collins company claimed to have suffered great loss es, and it demanded that the subsidy should be increase to eight hundred and fifty-eight thousand dollars.

R. M. T. Hunter, of Virginia, who was chairman o the Senate committee on finance, led the opposition, urg ing that we were trying to rival England by subsidiz ing these steamers from the United States treasury; tha the plan rested upon the same basis as the protection o iron factories; that it was injurious to all other lines ca rying freight and passengers, and that the ships woul not be suitable for use in time of war.[1]

Seward became deeply interested in the enterpris On April 27, 1852, he defended it in one of his careful ly prepared speeches.[2] He maintained that it was nec essary to break the English monopoly of carrying th mails; that it was essential to our national greatnes and would be invaluable in case of war; that the in crease in postage accruing promised to defray the ex pense in the near future; that a few more years wer necessary to decide whether steam navigation would b self-sustaining; that to surrender it at this time woul be nothing less than to yield "the proud commercia and political position we have gained by two wars wit Great Britain" and to take "the position of Mexico, the Canadas, and of the South American states." H had a vision of the world embraced in a single "grea commercial system, ramified by a thousand nerves pr

[1] *Globe*, 1851–52, 1148–49.

[2] 1 *Works*, 222–35.

ting from the one head at London. Yet, stupendous the scheme is, our own merchants, conscious of equal pacity and equal resources, and relying on experience success, stand here beseeching us to allow them to nteract its fulfilment, and ask of us facilities and equal to those yielded by the British government to citizens."[1] He concluded with an eloquent tribute America's mechanical genius, and expressed the belief t, considering our superior resources in soil and in the luence of freedom, our "enterprise will be adequate to glorious conflict, if it shall be sustained by constancy l perseverance on the part of their government."

The subject fired Seward's imagination, so that he de one of the most eloquent speeches of his life. No er argument in the debate was so finished and inspir-. The *Tribune* printed it in full and praised it editori-y.[2] Writing to Seward about it, Greeley said: "Dana, o has been correcting the manuscript for the press, s it is *the* speech of the session."[3]

While the proposition for increasing the subsidy was der consideration, the *Baltic*, one of the best of the llins steamers, came to Washington. Seward moved t the Senate should adjourn over one day so as to ept the invitation of the company to inspect the sel. Several members thought they scented cor-tion, and strenuously objected to the proposition, Seward carried his point.[4] The various influences work were so strong that Congress voted the desired sidy of eight hundred and fifty-eight thousand dol-s per annum, reserving the right to cut off the in-ase after giving six months' notice any time after the l of 1854.

[1] *Works*, 233, 234. [2] *Tribune*, April 28, 1852.
Letter of April 27, 1852. Seward MSS. This showed that Sew-had furnished the *Tribune* a copy of the speech in advance.
Globe, 1851–52, 657–59.

For several years there was the keenest rivalry speed between the Collins (American) and Cunar (British) lines. It was an international race which th people on each side watched with patriotic interest. the autumn of 1854, the *Arctic*, of the Collins line, co lided with a vessel in a fog, and over three hundred those on board went down. The disaster was felt lik a national calamity. Nevertheless, in 1855, Congre again voted the appropriation and tried to deprive self of the power to discontinue the increased subsid President Pierce vetoed the bill. The *Tribune* praise him ardently for his bold stand "against the overwhelm ing surges of venality that broke over a debauche Congress."[1] Congress endeavored to pass the bill ov the veto, but it was able only to continue the existin arrangement.[2]

In the debate of 1855 Seward showed that his e thusiasm had grown rather than lessened. Instead seeing the evils of such special legislation, he complain because the contract had not been made absolute an unchangeable for a number of years.[3] To the con plaint that it was "an extravagant and luxurious line

[1] The article was entitled "Thou Shalt Not Steal," and seems have been entirely non-partisan. See Pike's *First Blows, etc.*, 279–

[2] 3 Rhodes, 11, 12.

[3] "Sir, it is our misfortune that we have made an unnecessa stipulation, and reserve in our hands a power, in consequence of whi every opponent of this scheme about the purlieus of the Capitol, the city of New York, through the whole Union, all competitors, enemies, all haters of Collins and his prosperity, will come here a combine together to urge Congress to discontinue the contract th their own private ends may be attained. Such as this is the specta which we see before us. Here are your Vanderbilts and others, riv or enemies of the Collins line, who are pressing upon Congress to ercise this power of annulling the contract, in order that they m have the benefit of it; and when the proprietors of the line come f ward in great alarm and peril to defend their rights, they are told th their solicitations impair the dignity and taint the atmosphere of C gress."—*Globe*, 1854–55, Apdx., 301.

replied by saying that in his judgment it was "the per diplomatic representative of the United States to Old World." He pledged it his support, "now, and ays, with every contribution which is necessary." s ambition for such enterprises was boundless, and he ded: "I shall endeavor to extend similar lines of communication across the Pacific, until we shall have encled the world with the couriers of intelligence and instructions of civil and religious liberty."[1] Many ected that this plan created a monopoly and disraged the development of a steam marine. Seward's wer showed what an infatuation had taken possesn of him:

"Sir, it is the way, and the only way, in which you can ng a steam marine into existence. It is thirty years ce Dr. Lardner predicted that steam would never be a -sustaining agent upon the ocean. When the first mer crossed from Bristol to New York, the world de-ed the short-sightedness of the great philosopher. But, what is the fact? Thirty years have elapsed, and, algh steam is so necessary and useful an agent, it is not self-sustaining as a navigating power across the Atlannor across any other ocean; and you have your choice er by the government to aid and sustain steam lines, lo without them altogether. It is true, the time will e when it will not be necessary to render this aid; but il that time shall come it is most wise, and just, and dent to sustain it in this way."[2]

Many believed that the subsidy was extravagant, esially as Vanderbilt offered to perform the same ser- for about half the amount.[3] Early in 1856 a second lins steamer, the *Pacific* was wrecked, and all on rd were lost. A few months later Congress ordered discontinuance of the extra compensation. About same time Seward wrote home: "Collins's steamers

[1] *Globe*, 1854-55, Apdx., 301. [2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Globe*, 1854-55, Apdx., 289.

have been ruined by Vanderbilt's rivalry; and Vande
bilt himself is even worse off."[1] Collins soon went in
bankruptcy, and this grand scheme came to a sad end.

Cyrus W. Field became convinced that a telegraph
cable could be made and operated so as to connect Ne
foundland and Ireland; and before the end of 1856 h
obtained the assistance of Great Britain, for the haza
and expense of the experiment were too great for priva
capital. Then he visited Washington to enlist the su
port of Congress. Early in 1857 Seward introduced
bill providing for governmental aid in the form of
small subsidy.[2] The object was just the one to ca
forth his best efforts. He defended the proposition an
watched its interests in each house. Before the sessio
ended, the desired support of the government was s
cured. Within about a year the great enterprise w
brought to a successful completion. Nearly everywhe
Americans expressed their joy and pride in such demo
strations as would not be expected to follow any occu
rence less important than a national victory. The ci
zens of Auburn, always alert and appreciative of th
significance of passing events, flocked about Sewar
and demanded that he should give utterance to the
enthusiasm. He had a right to feel and express de
satisfaction on account of the part he had taken
helping forward the great undertaking.[3]

In a speech of July 29, 1852, on the "Survey of t
Arctic and Pacific Oceans," Seward set forth his op
ions as to the duty of the nation to maritime intere
and as to the functions of commerce in bringing t
Orient and the Occident into closer relations.[4] He h

[1] 2 Seward, 287.
[2] *Globe*, 1856–57, 258, 39
[3] 2 Seward, 348, 349.
[4] 1 *Works*, 236–53.

orted from the committee on commerce a bill the rpose of which was to cause an exploration and the king of charts of those parts of the Pacific and Arctic ans traversed by our vessels engaged in whaling or commerce with China and Japan. The work was to done by the Navy Department, and one hundred and nty-five thousand dollars was to be appropriated for s service.[1]

One would have to search long before finding as in-esting a summary of the whaling industry as Sew- gave in a few paragraphs. He was proud of the remacy of American whale-fishermen, for between 0 and 1824 England paid her whalers fifteen million lars in subsidies. He showed that the most profit-e, but at the same time most dangerous, fishing-unds were in the neighborhood of Behring Straits, ere a large part of the exploration was to be made. th the practical sense of a business man, he asked: r, have you looked recently at the China trade? It ches already seven millions in value annually. Have watched the California trade? Its export of bullion ne exceeds fifty millions of dollars annually, and as the mineral development of that state has only be-. The settlement of the Pacific coast is in a state heer infancy." But back of the great past and the derful present, and above the promises of the future, thought he saw a higher purpose, a special mission our people:

> Even the discovery of this continent and its islands, and organization of society and government upon them, nd and important as these events have been, were but ditional, preliminary, and ancillary to the more sublime lt now in the act of consummation—the reunion of two civilizations, which, having parted on the plains of four thousand years ago, and having travelled ever

[1] *Globe*, 1851–52, 1935, 2041.

afterward in opposite directions around the world, nc meet again on the coasts and islands of the Pacific Ocea . . . It will be followed by the equalization of the cond tion of society and the restoration of the unity of th human family. . . . Liberty has developed under improv forms of government, and science has subjected nature Western Europe and in America. Navigation, improv by steam, enables men to outstrip the winds, and intel gence conveyed by electricity excels in velocity the ligh With these favoring circumstances there has come also sudden abundance of gold that largely relieves labor fro its long subjection to realized capital. Sir, this moveme is no delusion."

A little farther on he asked:

"Who does not see that this movement [of commerc must effect our own complete emancipation from wh remains of European influence and prejudice, and in tu develop the American opinion and influence which sha remould constitutions, laws, and customs in the land th is first greeted by the rising sun? Sir, although I am socialist, no dreamer of a suddenly coming millennium, nevertheless cannot reject the hope that peace is now have her sway, and that as war has hitherto defaced a saddened the Atlantic world, the better passions of ma kind will soon have their development in the new theat of human activity."

He fancied that this change was to be wrought not means of wars and conquests, but by commerce. "Wha ever nation shall put that commerce into full emplo ment, and shall conduct it steadily with adequate e pansion, will become necessarily the greatest of existi states; greater than any that has ever existed." though England's flag was to be met almost everywhe —"rooted into the very earth," claiming supremacy continents, and whatever is most valuable in all t oceans—and although her commerce was advanced the never-tiring steam-engine and by her though language, and religion, Seward correctly believed that resources were abundant for competition with her.

Here we see Seward in his best, his true rôle. The position was right, constitutional, and statesmanlike. ere was no section to be flattered, no class of voters be wheedled, no selfish or ulterior purpose to serve. erefore he gave rein to his intelligence and his highest pulses. His graceful paragraphs show fine literary ll and oratorical power; his arguments are shielded no sophistical antitheses; his eloquence is the pro-ct of real feelings; his dreams and prophecies ex-ss the hopes of a zealous philanthropist, an ambitious riot, and an over-confident federalist.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE MAN AND THE SENATOR, 1849–61

SEWARD'S intellectual and social qualities were mos attractive. Yet probably no other antislavery man, o entering Congress, encountered such strong prejudice "The newspapers have given me so bad a characte that I am regarded with alarm and apprehension," h wrote from Washington in February, 1849. His mar ner was dignified, but not courtly, and his easy and u pretentious address was very pleasing. Although Mr Seward's health compelled her to remain in Aubur most of the time, the Senator, unlike the great majorit of his colleagues, always kept a well-equipped house i Washington.

A social dinner was his favorite form of hospitalit Of course northern Whigs or Republicans were mo frequently invited, but he early sought friendly relatio with political adversaries. Of a dinner-party in Apri 1852, Mrs. Seward reported: "We had, as usual, a sing lar combination of ultra-southern men, Free-Soilers, an Democratic members of Congress." In December, 185 he gave a reception to the Whig delegation from Ne York, and to "such other Whigs as choose to come- say forty or fifty." On May 28, 1858, he wrote: "I i vited all the Anti-Lecompton members of Congress t supper last night, together with most of the foreig Ministers. Nearly all came from North, South, Eas and West, Republicans, 'Americans,' and Democrats, a we had a very joyful time." Seward's house was mu

ke a club where political questions were discussed with ankness, even with opponents. There was rarely any tentation in his entertainments during this period, but e did not overlook the average public man's appreciaon of good dishes and choice wines and cigars.

His personal habits were well suited to his political osition and his many duties. He dressed plainly, usuly in black. He rose early, contrary to Washingn custom: at five or six in summer, and an hour or later in winter.[1] He often enjoyed an early walk to e market, and rarely omitted his daily letter to Mrs. ward when they were separated.[2] He wrote to her 1850: "I [have] had my walk, a visit to the public eenhouse, my coffee and eggs, and the *Intelligencer*, d now indulge myself with a word to you, before ginning the studies of the day." He was an interate smoker. He drank little except at dinner, d then in moderation; but he was always fond of the od-fellowship and sprightly conversation that wine d brandy are likely to inspire. He was much amused a remark made in his house by Greeley to the servant

[1] In a letter of May 16, 1850, to his wife, he said: "I retire at ten, l thus have enabled myself to resume my habit of rising at five."

[2] A few sentences from these notes will amply show their character:

'I have set my window wide open to draw in the morning sun, and egin the labor of the day as usual by rehearsing to you the details l incidents of the day that has just past."

' Your letters woo me home strongly by so many touching notices ny children, of the trees and flowers, and of friends."

On his fifty-fourth birthday he said: "I write to you a note to exss to you my joy at your returning health, and my assurances of tinued and enduring affection. I would that I were nearer to you."

' This is Christmas Eve. House solitary. How poor I am! I ll wake up to-morrow and there will be no beaming faces around no children, no friends. Well, I am tired of this, and I have but more Christmas after it to spend in Washington."

filling a champagne-glass: "That's right. All that you put in *there* is warranted not to kill!" As to work he had the happy faculty of accomplishing a great deal without seeming to be weighed down by it. He thought so far ahead and was so rapid a planner that he was hardly ever caught unprepared. Sumner told his colleagues that the New York Senator's life had been one of "unsurpassed industry."[1] After Seward moved to Washington his opportunities for miscellaneous reading became fewer and fewer. "What luxury there is in reading nowadays, when all that is done that way is not merely by stealth, but by 'flat burglary'!"[2]

[1] *Globe*, 1855–56, Apdx., 540.

[2] 2 Seward, 135. Writing of his father's summer life in Auburn Mr. F. W. Seward says: "He rose usually at six, and liked either a walk in the garden or a canter on horseback of a mile or two before breakfast. Then meeting the family at table, he would tell them what new flower was in bloom, what fruit had ripened, what birds had come, and how they were occupied, what change or improvement had found in the village streets or on the country roads. After a cigar and the morning paper, he would go to the old writing-chair in the bay-window of the tower, and here write his letters and study law cases or public addresses. . . . Sometimes the visitors would be so frequent, and the visits so long, that he would find it necessary to supplement the day's work by continuing his studies till late at night. The papers in his cases would be sent to the law-office to be copied." . . .

"He liked to push his work vigorously . . . and then take a day for recreation. With his family, or some friend or neighbor, he would drive to the Owasco or Cayuga lake and spend the day in boating or fishing. Or he would take a longer drive to Skaneateles, Aurora, Elbridge, or some other village in the vicinity, call upon acquaintances there, and return at nightfall. In the evening, when not at work, he liked a rubber of whist, conversation, or reading."

. . . "Though having little leisure, he contrived to find time, in the course of a season, for a good deal of reading. Old and standard authors he preferred to any literary novelties. He would devote his spare moments, for a week or two, to some poet, philosopher, or historian, and then take up another. Chaucer and Spenser, Ben Jonson and Ariosto, were among his favorites at this period. Of Englis

Of all the public men of his time, probably Seward velled most extensively for pleasure. It was not ange that social and political questions in all states d countries interested him, but it is very unusual to d a busy and ambitious politician that has eyes and s and tastes for almost everything. The careful and eresting accounts that Seward wrote of his experi-es from day to day are crowded with evidences of his husiastic temperament, quick perception, and great ntal and physical activity.

In July, 1857, the Senator and Mr. and Mrs. Fred-ck W. Seward started on a trip to Labrador. They de several short stops between Niagara and Quebec. t for enjoyment and novelty they spent a whole ht in a rowboat on the St. Lawrence. At Quebec a ing schooner was chartered. They engaged a cap-n, a pilot, and a seaman, and laid in provisions and ipments for a month's cruise. Labrador was the l, and sailing and fishing according to wind and er circumstances were the chief pleasures. They ght cod, mackerel, trout, salmon, and lobsters, at erent times. Seward kept a "Log of the Schooner *erence*," from July 31 to August 27, 1857. It was tten in a flowing, jocose style, and was designed rely for the family circle at Auburn. But it was nd to be so pleasing that the senatorial sailor con-ted to its publication in the New York *Tribune* and Albany *Evening Journal*.[1] A few selections from log will give the flavor of Seward's quality as a veller and descriptive writer :

[1] ists he liked Sidney Smith, Macaulay, Mackintosh, Jeffrey, and yle. Prescott's histories he read as fast as they came out. gham's Political Philosophy, Lieber's Political Ethics, Burke's ches, and Tooke's *Diversions of Purley*, he read over more than ."—2 Seward, 203, 204.

[2] Seward, 302 ff.

"There was a dispute kept up for some time, yesterday between the cook and the pilot, whether the waters aroun us were fresh still, or salt. We compromised by boilin our soup with fresh water from the cask, and our pork wit that brought up from the depth beneath us. Toward nigh myriads of ducks dotted the waves, and so late as te o'clock birds were heard singing in notes not unlike thos of the robin and the mocking-bird. Here and there a hug porpoise disturbed the glassy surface as he came up to in hale, and once or twice a seal thrust his black and hair doglike head like a buoy above the water. We studie the geography of the moon through our spy-glass, after th headlands of our planet became indistinct in the dark ness."

"At two P.M. yesterday we passed a high rocky poin and the river Saguenay was disclosed to our view. It is mile wide at its mouth, but this magnificent flood seem narrow in contrast with the twenty miles breadth of the S Lawrence. The Saguenay inspired admiration when firs seen, three hundred years ago, by white men, and it is ma vellous yet. It flows from Lake St. John (eighty mil northward from here) in a defile between mountains fiftee hundred to two thousand and two thousand five hundre feet high, and its depth lower than that of the St. Lawrenc Far up as we could see, and those acquainted say so fa as it is navigable, its banks are rugged, and scarce a hab tation is found upon it. The shore of the St. Lawrence almost equally rugged. Here and there is a hamlet hun on the mountain-side, surrounded by sterility itself. . . We landed on the rocks, where a dead porpoise and a dea seal had been washed by the tide. On the beach we wer kindly received by a young Scotchman, who lives in a lon low, and old building, which proves, inside, to be a ver respectable mansion, and which overlooks the bay. . . He gave us brandy-and-water, and tendered us hospital ties under his roof for a day or a week. He showed u peltries and snow-shoes and the Indian-made appar which he uses in his excursions in the winter."

"The events recorded in this Log are not great nor bri iant. They determine neither the fate of states nor th character of heroes. But they are nevertheless dramat in one respect. They are various and sudden in the transition. Yesterday at noon we were humbly suing

ankee fisherman, with our silver in hand, for a few ackerel. At tea we were called off by the pilot to attend our lines. I drew up, from the depth of one hundred et, a huge cod. Hardly had we disengaged him from the ook when F. drew up two at once, and then even A. rought up one, large enough for an alderman's feast, from s watery home. We continued enjoying this sport for vo hours, when we relinquished it, simply because it was human and a waste of time to add to our stores at pres-nt."

"At five this morning the forest was whitened with affins leaving their roosts, and cawing and clamorous so to be heard for miles. Ducks are sailing round us with ne utmost nonchalance; porpoises are taking air-baths; nd last evening, after we had wearied ourselves with draw-g cod-fish up from their recesses, and the sun had just t, a young whale calf, almost as large as an elephant, ap-eared just off the after quarter-deck, and moved around the bows, near enough to be taken with a noose."

A journey of a different character was the one that egan with such unusual demonstrations in New York arbor in May, 1859.[1] He visited the great capitals nd had interviews with many of the rulers and famous atesmen of Europe. When it is remembered that eward had never held office in any administration, and at his name was, at best, but little known on the ntinent of Europe, this trip was a very surprising ex-ression of his ambition to know, and be known among, e great public men of the world.

During the two months spent in England he received ch attentions as are rarely shown to any one less than Secretary of State or a Minister. Queen Victoria in-ted him to be presented without the usual delay. The mes of the prominent persons he met would make a ng list. Among them were Palmerston, Lord John ussell, Gladstone, Macaulay, Harriet Martineau, and

[1] See Vol. I., p. 494. 2 Seward, 362–436, gives the traveller's rec-ds of the trip.

many others famous in politics or literature. Breakfasts, luncheons, dinners, receptions, and balls he attended as if he were a visiting diplomatist of great fame and high rank. He did not exaggerate when he wrote: "I leap from grave to gay — from history to poetry and romance. I fall flat into the midst of spindles and power-looms. Just now I am fresh from Holyrood, and old Stirling, and from patrimonial seats of the nobility—fallen into the black, thick smoke of Yorkshire." Manchester, Glasgow, and Leeds, with their countless industries and many thousands of factory-hands, did not interest him less than vast country estates and the aristocratic society of London.

In France he met Lamartine and several Ministers of State, and spent a day very familiarly with Napoleon III. at Compiègne. In Rome everything seemed to interest him, and of course he—a candidate for the presidential nomination in 1860—did not overlook the influence of the Catholic Church. The Pope granted him a long audience, and gave him his blessing. Pius IX. knew all about the New York Senator's past, and playfully expressed "some good wishes for my [Seward's] higher advancement." It also appeared that the Holy Father had received many publications of the United States government on geology and natural history. Who but Seward would have dreamed that such documents would call forth the Pope's hearty thanks as they did? Elsewhere in Italy he had interviews with Victor Emanuel and Cavour. He visited the ruin of Cicero's Tusculum, and spent eight hours alone in Pompeii, letting his imagination conjure up the strange scenes and incidents of life there eighteen centuries before.

He went from Italy to Egypt. Desiring to see the Holy Land also, but finding no steamboat, he chartered a fruit-boat hailing from Jaffa. Its captain and seven seamen spoke only Arabic. A few sentences from the

record he kept of the weird voyage of several days will suffice to show how Seward stopped at no obstacles and laughed at all privations:

"The ship is a schooner of about twenty tons; her name, *The Blest*, is her only good trait. . . .

"There are no berths, no beds, no tables, no provisions, no dishes. We hastily extemporized our arrangements. A dozen chickens, a bologna sausage, six dozen eggs, with rice and bread and tea, constitute our stores. Four pieces of matting, two laid under us, one over us, and one wrapt around the courier, serve for our beds. The cabin is filled with dry sand for ballast; and ants, cockroaches, and all kinds of vermin inhabit it. We therefore sleep, as well as sit, on the deck.

"The courier is our cook; an inverted half-barrel is our table; but we do not approach it too near, lest it may expose us to vermin. For lack of chairs, we sit down on the deck, and screen ourselves from the sun as well as we can by the shade of the sails."

In Vienna he called on Rechberg, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and was granted an audience by the Emperor. A few days later he visited the battle-fields of Magenta and Solferino, lately drenched in blood. From Brussels he went to see the famous field of Waterloo. King Leopold I. of Belgium invited him to a state dinner and in other ways showed him special attention.

Seward's oratory and genius for expression reached their highest development while he was Senator; for he was then in his prime physically, and had more time for reflection than later.[1] Some have thought Seward's speeches more showy than brilliant. He was not an orator by nature, and his style lacked the flow and rhythm common in the best productions of such

[1] For some mention of his characteristics as writer and orator in an earlier period, see *ante*, Vol. I., 189 ff.

masters as Webster, Clay, and Beecher. But the speeches of no political orator of the period were so popular and effective, or attained so high an average of excellence. As Morley has said of Burke, Seward's speeches had "the style of his subjects, the amplitude, the weightiness, the laboriousness, the sense, the high flight," suited to the discussion of questions that were of vital moment to the nation. They were ardent, and many of them were designed to increase popular excitement. Yet they contained a surprising amount of political wisdom and sound judgment. His philosophizing about liberty and political morality, his grasp of the leading facts in the territorial, industrial, and social development of our country, and his skill in arousing prejudice, indignation, anger, sympathy, fear, or courage —these and many other qualities gave strength, color and charm to what he said. He was a close student of Burke, and, like that great Irishman, he studied and practised politics with his imagination; it showed in all his speaking and writing. The last paragraph of the "higher-law" speech is a good illustration:

"For the vindication of that vote, I look not to the verdict of the passing hour, disturbed as the public mind now is by conflicting interests and passions, but to that period happily not far distant, when the vast regions over which we are now legislating shall have received their destined inhabitants.

"While looking forward to that day, its countless generations seem to me to be rising up and passing in dim and shadowy review before us; and a voice comes forth from their serried ranks, saying: 'Waste your treasures and your armies, if you will; raze your fortifications to the ground; sink your navies into the sea; transmit to us even a dishonored name, if you must; but the soil you hold in trust for us—give it to us free. You found it free and conquered it to extend a better and surer freedom over it. Whatever choice you have made for yourselves let us have no partial freedom; let us all be free; let the

eversion of your broad domain descend to us unincumered and free from the calamities and from the sorrows f human bondage.'"[1]

It was not uncommon for Seward to speak on special ccasions. Four formal addresses were delivered in the ears 1853–55: "The Destiny of America," at the dedi-ation of the Capital University, Columbus, Ohio; "The 'rue Basis of American Independence," before the merican Institute, New York city; "The Physical, Ioral, and Intellectual Development of the American 'eople," before the Phi Beta Kappa Society of Yale 'ollege; and "The Pilgrims and Liberty," at Plymouth.[2] 'hey gave him an opportunity to project his specu-ations and generalizations into broader fields than were sually open to him. In eloquence these efforts can-ot be classed as of the first order, nor were the oc-asions especially inspiring; but in thought, expression, nd interest they deserve a high rank as political essays ather than orations. The formal speech at Plymouth as a profound study of the political significance of he ideas and acts of the Pilgrims, and it would have een strange, even with Seward's poor elocution, if it ad not received great praise. But these and other ublic addresses not of a partisan character are now nportant chiefly as expositions of Seward's theories of ur national development, and as indications of what he ould have preferred to do in politics if he had had a ee hand. They will also convince any candid man hat Seward had a statesmanlike philosophy and an ex-aordinary intellect.

As Seward avoided as much as possible Weed's prov-ce of keeping up confidential relations with political llowers, he won new supporters by his non-partisan

[1] For other passages in the imaginative style, see 1 *Works*, 179 ff., 5 ff.

[2] 4 *Works*, 121–203.

addresses and cultivated their friendship by the distribution of his political speeches with probably a more lavish hand than any Senator of the time. He often said that he spent his whole salary in the printing and circulation of his speeches.[1] His private correspondence shows that bundles of his speeches were forwarded to devoted supporters in different parts of the United States for distribution. As early as the beginning of 1852 he asked one of his political friends in California for a list of the prominent Whigs of that State.[2] The speeches were sent in all directions and often without solicitation. The recipients always felt pleased—for in those days almost any sort of reading-matter was welcome—and they must often have wondered how the famous New-Yorker had obtained their names and addresses. "I am hurried by sending off speeches by the thousand," he wrote, August 5, 1852. In subsequent years it was oftener a matter of tens of thousands, and sometimes of hundreds of thousands.

Seward's bearing as a Senator and as a party antagonist was excellent. His prominence, and the keenness and importance of what he said, made him the object of frequent and severe attacks. The charges were often very offensive, and were designed to injure his reputation. Shortly after the delivery of the "higher-law" speech he said: "I am not to be drawn into personal altercations by interrogatories addressed to me. I acknowledge the patriotism, the wisdom, the purity of every member of this body."[3] And again he announced:

"I shall never assail the motives of any members of this body. I shall never defend myself against any imputation

[1] 2 Seward, 162; 3 Seward, 481.

[2] This is shown by a letter in the Seward MSS. from W. H. Shepard San Francisco, February 28, 1852.

[3] *Globe*, 1849–50, 518.

motives made against me. If such imputations are made, whatever shape they may come, as they have done [come?] various shapes here, I shall pass them by in silence. hey will not in the least disturb my equanimity. I will nture further to assure those who may make them, that ey will not in the least degree change my social and pri- te feelings in regard to them."[1]

his was a very extraordinary policy, but what is ranger, he adhered to it without a single important ex- ption. Foote was the most persistent and insulting of ward's political enemies. It was notorious at the me that, after one of the Mississippian's most inexcus- le attacks, Seward invited him to dinner.[2] After a nator had made an important speech it was customary r him to pass around a paper to ascertain just how any copies his colleagues desired to send out. Such a per in regard to a recent speech by Foote, in which ward had been criticised with special venom, was acci- ntally handed to the New York Senator, who promptly bscribed for more than any one else. Foote's surprise d curiosity were hardly satisfied by Seward's explana- on that he wanted the copies for distribution in New ork![3]

Seward's language was not always perfectly respect- l and free from sarcasm and reproach. Toward Presi- nts Pierce and Buchanan he exercised on a few oc- sions very little self-restraint. But in relation to his lleagues he was equally careful of his own expressions d unmoved by theirs. Mrs. Seward, who was in the llery one day when some of his remarks drew upon m a "tornado" of reproaches from Democrats, wrote at he "looked the personification of indifference, with s face turned directly toward the speaker."[4] Natural-

[1] *Globe*, 1849–50, 686.

[2] New York *Tribune*, March 19, 1850; Albany *Evening Atlas*, March 1850.

[3] Statement of Mr. F. W. Seward to the author.

[4] 2 Seward, 120.

ly he was sometimes mistaken, and a few times in th course of exciting debates his remarks were cutting but whenever any exception was taken to them by fellow-Senator he was ready to repair any injustice It was true, as he remarked in the first debate on th Clayton-Bulwer treaty: "I have received injuries many of them, here. The memory of them died in th hour in which they were committed."[1] He neither in terrupted an opponent by annoying questions nor as sumed a contentious personal attitude. Angry alterca tions between Senators were frequent, but Seward wa never concerned with them except in the capacity of peacemaker.[2] In 1856 he said: "I therefore hold (as general truth) that all men are sincere and honest; an I hold him to be merely a fool who esteems me to b otherwise."[3] He early adopted for his guidance Cow per's lines—

> "A moral, sensible, and well-bred man
> Will not affront me,—and no other can."[4]

Notwithstanding these traits, Seward was, until th winter of 1860–61, the politician most hated and feare by the pro-slavery zealots. Benjamin expressed th general opinion of the South when he called him "th distinguished author of almost every heresy that ap pears" regarding slavery.[5] The secessionists usuall had Seward in mind when they threatened that th

[1] 1 *Works*, 385.

[2] In June, 1858, he negotiated peace between Senators Davis, of Mi sissippi, and Chandler, of Michigan, and between Gwin, of Californi and Wilson, of Massachusetts. In the latter instance a challenge ha been sent.—2 Seward, 346.

[3] 4 *Works*, 563.

[4] 3 Seward, 481. In answer to Hale's severe criticism on accoun of supporting the army bill, he calmly remarked: "I never yet hav seen the time when I could not bear a difference with friends, as never yet have seen the time when I cared in the least for unkind hostile reproaches from my enemies."—*Globe*, 1857–58, 520.

[5] *Globe*, 1855–56, 1094.

ion should come to an end in case of the election of black Republican" President. Nevertheless, Seward k special pains to cultivate pleasant personal re- ions with prominent Southerners. Unlike Sumner l others, he had no prejudices against slave-holders. ifferences of opinion, even on the subject of slavery, h us are political, not social or personal, differences. ere is not one disunionist or disloyalist among us " he said in February, 1860. He was at one time y friendly with Jefferson Davis.[1] Senator Gwin, dly less a Southerner than Davis, was a useful link ween Seward and the leaders from the other sec- n.[2] At the beginning of 1858 Seward wrote to his Frederick: "The southern and Democratic op- ition in social circles has given way, and society of classes is profuse in its courtesies." Even in the lst of the Civil War he spoke of "our old brethren the South . . . with whom we used to have such asant social times."[3]

1 Davis's *Jefferson Davis*, 579 ff.

Derby's *Fifty Years, etc.*, 70. The following story is at least ap- ximately true, and well illustrates some of Seward's characteristics: r. Seward was anxious to enter the 'charmed circle' of southern l life, from which, as a 'black Republican,' he was rigidly ex- ed. Doctor Gwin, with considerable trepidation, he afterwards essed, invited him to a large dinner-party at his house, where ly all the guests were southern Senators—among them, Toombs, ter, Mason, and Breckinridge—and their wives. Mrs. Gwin, afraid ssign him to any of the lady guests, herself took Mr. Seward in inner. Mr. Seward, by his brilliant and interesting conversation, dissipated the chilliness his presence had caused, and turned a great success what Doctor Gwin had feared would prove a al failure.

The next day Mr. Hunter said to Mr. Toombs: 'When I met rd to-day he had the impertinence to say, "Good-morning, her Hunter."' 'Did you knock him down?' exclaimed Toombs. y, no,' replied Hunter; 'how could I knock a man down for ng me his brother?'"—18 *Overland Monthly*, 2d series, p. 470.

5 *Works*, 512.

As long as the Whig party lasted Seward's success a leader depended on his keeping up agreeable relatio with the southern Whigs. There were so many stor to the effect that in private he disavowed what he h said in public that there must have been some grou for them, although the inferences drawn were probab erroneous. Here is a fair illustration: Jefferson Dav when ill and in a nervous condition, once asked:

"'Mr. Seward, how can you make, with a grave fa those piteous appeals for the negro that you did in t Senate; you were too long a school-master in Georgia believe the things you say?'

"He looked at me [Mrs. Davis] quizzically, and smilin ly answered, 'I do not, but these appeals, as you call the are potent to affect the rank and file of the North.' M Davis said, very much shocked at Mr. Seward's answ 'But, Mr. Seward, do you never speak from convicti alone?' 'Nev—er,' answered he. Mr. Davis raised his blindfolded head, and with much heat, whispere 'As God is my judge, I never spoke from any other m tive.' Mr. Seward put his arm about him and gently l down his head, saying, with great tenderness, 'I know y do not—I am always sure of it.'

"After this inscrutable human moral, or immoral, pa dox left us, we sat long discussing him with sincere gret and the hope that he had been making a feigned c fidence to amuse us."[1]

This response was undoubtedly his jesting and evas way of attempting to convey some such thought as th "We are speaking of an unpleasant subject for conver tion between us. Think as you like about me; it wo be useless to try to explain to you what concerns m self and my constituents." Another story, also record many years after the alleged incident occurred, repo Seward as acknowledging, while travelling in Virgi that he had not been in earnest in declaring that annexation of Texas would be unconstitutional, but

[1] 1 Davis's *Jefferson Davis*, 581.

de such a declaration because Texas was not to be e territory.[1] As to the incident in Virginia, a letter the time makes it plain that Seward's aim was to oid discussing sectional questions on social occasions.[2]

During the twelve years of his senatorship Seward s a stanch partisan. More than once he refused to nd with the majority, but it was always because he ieved that his ideas were wiser politically. In his t speech in the Senate he tried to persuade his Whig leagues of the South that he had "the right to enter- n and debate extreme opinions, without proscription l with fidelity to the Union."[3] This was the shrewd- sort of partisanship. Just after the "higher-law" ech, Dawson asked him if he still claimed to be a ig. Seward answered thus:

"My duty is to promote the welfare, interest, and happess of the people of the United States; and I hold that an do so in no effectual way by going alone and indedent. That is always the error of schismatics. Therefore, in the discharge of my duty, I ally myself to such a ty as I find most approximate to the principles and sents that I entertain. I will do the Whig party the ice, or injustice, to say that I have been a member of it my active life; and I will do it the great disservice to that, no matter what may happen, and who may put under the ban, I shall be the last to leave it, however viduals may disown me or the principles I maintain. I l adhere to it, because I think of the two great parties the most devoted to the cause of freedom and emantion."[4]

ly in 1858 there was an angry debate in the Senate he proposition to increase the army for the avowed pose of putting down the insurrection of the Mor-

[1] *Southern Historical Society Papers*, 354. Don Piatt's *Memories*, 136 ff., and 129 *North American Review*, 135, give other illustra-
[2] Seward, 106.
[3] 1 Seward, 777, 778.
[4] *Globe*, 1849-50, 518.

mons, who had expelled all evidence of Federal authori
from their would-be independent "State of Deseret
Hale, Fessenden, and other Republicans feared le
Buchanan might employ the additional forces again
the free-state men in Kansas. With Seward it was a
axiom that it was unsafe for any public man to withho
means desired for defence of the government. In diffe
ent ways he tried to prevent the use of the propose
regiment for any except the specified purpose, but h
would not oppose the administration's request. Ha
unjustly likened Seward's attitude to that of Webster
March 7, 1850; and he cut Seward to the quick by r
ferring to him as the man "upon whom the eyes and th
hearts of the friends of liberty have centred and clu
tered," and by adding that he himself had expected th
Seward "might lead great hosts to the consummation
their hopes and their wishes."[1] "I think I may claim
Seward replied, indirectly, "that, when ten years sha
have passed over the debates of to-day, when ten yea
of rest shall have been allowed to me after my servi
here shall have been completed, there will be no ma
living who, with the records all before him, will be ab
to tell whether I belonged to one party or another. N
sir; I know nothing, I care nothing—I never did, I nev
shall, for party."[2] However, he wrote a few days late
"Mormonism belongs to the brood of 'Popular Sove
eignty.' Connection with it does not seemingly har
the Democratic party. *But how long could the Repu
lican party survive the clear or imputed responsibility f
any disaster on the Plains? I have studied the matt
deeply, and conversed with officers and others.*"[3]

Seward continued to hear the two voices—in fact, h
continued to act two distinct rôles. It was John Quin

[1] *Globe*, 1857–58, 520. [2] *Globe*, 1857–58, 521.
[3] 2 Seward, 335. Not italicized in the original.

Adams Seward that uttered the telling phrases and made he severe arraignments and was the hope of the radi- als like Gerrit Smith, Theodore Parker, and, at times, f the Garrisonians.[1] He usually favored what was oldest and most extreme if it stopped short of violence. On the other hand, Thurlow Weed Seward kept in close elations with the party organization; he watched the lans of the politicians, changed the programme to suit onditions, and tried to win all classes of men. Adams eward was ardently antislavery and expected to live history as a great philanthropist. Weed Seward was etermined to control the patronage and to live in the White House. The one regarded himself as a martyr to sacred cause, and wrote: "I am *alone*, in the Senate nd in Congress, and about in the United States, alone. While adhering faithfully to the Whigs, I dare to hold n the disallowed right of disenfranchised men and asses. I must stand in that solitude and maintain it, r fall altogether."[2] The other was alone in deciding hich principles and theories should be given promi- ence and which should be ignored or explained away. he result was that Seward continued to be the political vorite of a large proportion of the champions of free- om and of ardent youthful voters of the best impulses, s well as of the practical men and hard-headed poli- cians, calculating on tendencies and eager for office.

[1] To Gerrit Smith he wrote, March 31, 1858: "Accept my thanks r your approval [probably of the speech of March 3, 1858]. I hope u may live to number many more years and to witness the decline that monstrous evil which we have resisted together so long.

"I begin to have faith in the uprising of the masses. I have never fore seen such indications of anxiety and desire to hear in the slave ates. When we shall have trained the whole generation of the free ates to principles of freedom will they not carry those principles to their new homes, and where under the flag will they not make ose homes?"—MS. His correspondence with Parker was equally endly.

[2] 2 Seward, 116.

When, in 1850, Seward thought that courage and dash and the "higher law" would win, he rushed ahead fearlessly. In 1851–52 he submitted to the conditions of compromise and would take no risks with the anti-slavery agitators. But he was ready to go with the jingoes "as far as he who goes farthest" in reckless intermeddling with foreign affairs when it would serve as a profitable digression, or as a means of benefiting his party or of injuring the Democrats. At times, during the Kansas excitement, he was one of the most successful, and almost revolutionary, agitators. After the John Brown invasion, when passions needed cooling and calming influences, he undertook to demonstrate that the impending dangers were not due to a real conflict of interests and principles, as he had repeatedly said, but were largely imaginary. In the campaign of 1860 he once more gallantly led the charge. But in December, when the storm-cloud appeared, he again became very conservative and cautious. Watching the changing circumstances, his first aim, as leader of the opposition, was not so much to advance principles as to use them as a means to party victories. His great successes were the result of keen perceptions, quick sympathies, and close association with men of different types and tendencies. He rarely failed where success was possible because he was almost sure to see every opportunity, and to make the most of it. A statesman in character and purpose, he was yet a consummate opportunist.

Seward would have preferred to be a theorizer and non-partisan reformer—for his natural tastes and temperament were of that character—if thereby he could have obtained the fame and the power he sought. He acted on the theory that whatever his ideas might be they were of little consequence unless there was some opportunity for him to carry them out. So the question how to gain personal ascendency was always present

He believed that the Whig and then the Republican party would be much better for the country in any case than the Democratic party. To support a third party would entail a loss of time, and at least a temporary sacrifice of power. As his influence and success increased, he came to look upon himself as the one person that could defeat the schemes and undermine the strength of the Democrats and the secessionists. Once in authority, he would advance the public interests as fast as the people approved. To advocate right principles at a time when to do so would strengthen the opposition, or to maintain a strict consistency and frank honesty in public utterances at the expense of letting an enemy gain an advantage, he regarded as a mistaken use of one's resources—a surrender of a practical good for a theoretical one. Of course Seward's sincerity was often brought into question, much to his own sorrow. However, nothing, of which absolute knowledge is impossible, is more certain than that he was never consciously inconsistent. He considered the object, and by it tested the means. In his mind there was no inconsistency between being opposed to compromise in 1850 and in favor of it in 1861; between denouncing popular sovereignty in 1854 and accepting it in 1858; because each position was, at the particular time, believed to be most favorable to freedom. Likewise, to take one attitude regarding the Clayton-Bulwer treaty in 1853, and just the opposite one in 1856, did not prove real inconsistency, for his aim on both occasions was to prevent the Democrats from gaining an advantage. Such was his philosophy of action.

To call him a great politician is neither precise nor adequate. He is entitled to the rank that results from a fair judgment of his qualities as a Senator in comparison with those of his contemporaries in active politics. In sincerity and in the moral quality of his purposes he

was as much below Sumner as Sumner was below hir in political skill and practical statesmanship. Hale wa hardly more than a merry, sincere, and effective ag tator. Chase was mentally less brilliant than Seward but his character was more ingenuous. His service were so generally recognized that if he had had a mar ager like Weed, and if Seward had been dependent o his own resources, Chase might have outranked his Nev York rival. Cass and Douglas and Marcy were inferio to Seward in methods, purposes, and associations. O the southern men, Jefferson Davis most resembled hir in his talent for directing the thoughts and influencin the action of a whole section. But neither Davis nor an other contemporary, except Clay, could rival Seward i his genius for politics and the wide range of his abilitie Although Seward's estimate of himself was in many re spects inaccurate, it is safe to say that Seward the Sen ator—like Seward the chief of the New York Whigs, i the previous years—stands first, among all the succes ful public men with whom he was associated, in th quality and extent of his service. His senatorial caree is probably the best illustration in American history c how far the politician may go toward reform, and ho much the reformer must bend to practical politics in o der to attain position and power and accomplish result that contemporaries and history regard as great. H was not the father of the Republican party; but h more than any other man, was its master. He was no the first of antislavery champions; but of the grea antislavery North, having a reasonable and worth political purpose, he was, as Jefferson Davis said, "th directing intellect."

CHAPTER XXVIII

IGNS OF THE INADEQUACY OF SEWARD'S POLICY OF PEACE AND RECONCILIATION

SEWARD became Secretary of State March 5, 1861. No chief of that department has had difficulties and opportunities as great as those that confronted Seward. Before them the stoutest heart might well have grown faint and the most resourceful mind have been filled with doubts. Seward was hopeful, confident, even.

Prior to March 4th, the Republicans had necessarily been theorists merely, for they had lacked the power to legislate or to administer the laws. Now they were in full possession of the executive branch of the government, and had practical control of Congress; and, therefore, they were bound to pursue a definite course. The all-important question was: How shall the secession movement, actual and prospective, be met and overcome?

Most of the inhabitants of the city of Washington sympathized more with the disunionists than with the Republicans, and hardly any of them believed in vigorous measures. The well-organized and determined Confederacy of seven states was not immediately in front of the national capital, but it rested safely behind a double row of states, which promised to serve the purpose of a vast series of defensive fortifications. It was a foregone conclusion that if anything resembling coercion should be directed against a slave state, the wide territory between the District of Columbia and the Confederacy

would quickly swarm with armed secessionists. Theoretically it was the plain duty of the President to enforce the laws and protect the property of the nation, but practically there were numerous grave objections. Many men at the North denied that the central government had the constitutional right to do more than to act defensively. Others insisted that there was no warrant whatever for an attempt to conquer the resistance of a whole state, much less that of a group of states.

If the Confederacy had gained possession of all the forts within its territory, as it did of the post-offices and custom-houses, probably there would have been no war for the Union. But Fort Sumter, in Charleston harbor, and in sight of the fountain of secession, was still held by United States troops. They also retained possession of Fort Pickens, off Pensacola, Florida, which was the chief stronghold of the Gulf. The stars and stripes continued to wave over a few forts of minor importance, which the Confederates expected would soon be a part of their domain. Neither Fort Sumter nor Fort Pickens could be voluntarily surrendered or evacuated by the United States without national humiliation and a confession of inability or fear to resist disunion. Nor could the Confederacy consent to the retention of these forts by the Federal government without inviting the reproach that it dared not assert the sovereignty it claimed. Hence, the thoughtful men on each side calculated that if there was to be a war it would begin at one of these points. So far, a conflict had been avoided by means of mutual agreements: the Confederates in each locality promised not to attack the neighboring fort on condition that Buchanan would not endeavor to reinforce it. The effect of this was highly beneficial to the secessionists. Every day the resources of Major Anderson, who was in command of Fort Sumter, became less, while South Carolina was surrounding the harbor with forts and obstruct-

ing the channel. Although the *Brooklyn* and other warships, with hundreds of troops aboard, hovered about and might have reinforced Fort Pickens and removed all danger of its seizure, this ill-balanced truce, so stupid and cowardly on Buchanan's part, tied the hands of the United States officers, while the Confederates planted batteries and prepared for offensive warfare.

It was expected that Lincoln's inaugural address would either contain an unequivocal declaration that would lead to a vigorous policy and the execution of the laws or exhibit a willingness to compromise and thereby strengthen those favoring conciliation. It did neither. Concessionists and coercionists each argued that it committed the new administration to their side. The pledge that the power confided in the President would "be used to hold, occupy, and possess the property and places belonging to the government, and to collect the duties and imposts," was much weakened by the further announcement that "beyond what may be necessary for these objects, there will be no invasion, no using of force against or among the people anywhere." This showed that some laws and executive duties were to be overlooked. The address might mean either war or peace, according to the stress put upon different passages, but even in its most touching appeals for reconciliation and fraternity there was no suggestion of cowardice. It is now plain that no definite course of action had been determined.

On March 5th, Lincoln was surprised to learn from Judge Holt, still Secretary of War, that Major Anderson had reported that it would be impossible to retain Fort Sumter more than a few weeks, unless it should be reinforced and resupplied, and that it would require twenty thousand men to relieve and hold the fort against the Confederates. The papers were referred to General Scott for his opinion, and on the same day he replied,

"Evacuation seems almost inevitable."[1] Because several of the ablest military men agreed with Scott that it was doubtful if the difficulties of reinforcement could be overcome, it was "openly and half-officially printed in the newspapers nearly a whole week"[2] that the troops were to be withdrawn.[3] There is no positive evidence that Lincoln ever said directly that Sumter would be evacuated, but there are many signs that he thought such an outcome likely.[4] However, he continued to make inquiries and to study the perplexing situation.

Delay and indecision were prolonged by the greed and persistency of the office-seekers. It seemed as if the surging, enthusiastic crowds at the Chicago convention had marched upon Washington to claim their rewards. Until long after 1861 the Jacksonian "clean sweep" was one of the first principles of party contests; and if ever excusable, it surely was when the offices were filled with men appointed by the present leaders of secession. Applicants so swarmed in and about the White House and the department buildings that it was difficult to go or come. The President, as Seward said, took up first the business that was most pressed upon him, and this was the distribution of the spoils.[5] The main question was discussed, but decision was postponed from day to

[1] 3 Nicolay and Hay, 378. [2] 3 Nicolay and Hay, 400, 407.

[3] Stanton reported to Buchanan, March 12th, that it was then "the universal impression in this city that Sumter and Pickens will both be surrendered."—2 Curtis's *Buchanan*, 531.

[4] Crawford, 364. Scott considered the abandonment of Sumter so probable that he drafted an order to that effect for the President's signature.—3 Nicolay and Hay, 408.

[5] On March 16, 1861, Seward wrote: "Solicitants for office besiege him, and he, of course, finds his hands full for the present. My duties call me to the White House one, two, or three times a day. The grounds, halls, stairways, closets are filled with applicants, who render ingress and egress difficult."—2 Seward, 503. See also Julian's *Recollections*, 193, 194; 2 Curtis's *Buchanan*, 534.

y, in the hope that some new occurrence might open vay for its solution.

It was well known that Lincoln's powers as a politi- l debater were of the first order, and of course the ection had made him the head of the administration; t he had shown no qualities that had convinced even od judges of men that he would be President in the lest sense of the word. He was awkward and rustic his manners and appearance, and was thoroughly un- nventional in his talk. It was assumed that either ward or Chase would have a directing hand in af- rs. Coming into strange surroundings, Lincoln wisely ined on the man he had chosen for the first place in Cabinet. This must have reminded Seward of how, elve years before, Taylor accepted his advice and as- tance in regard to the most important questions of at time. No one in public life throughout the period ce 1849 had been so prominent as Seward. He now lly believed that his assurances, that sixty days' more ns would give a much brighter and more cheer- atmosphere, had been made good; that he had rought the ship off the sands,"[1] and that it was his thing words that had "saved us and carried us along us far." And all this was entirely true in the sense meant. What more natural than to infer that if he uld either go home or become Minister to England, would "leave the country to chance"; whereas, if he uld go into Lincoln's "compound Cabinet," he could ndure enough to make the experiment successful."[2] hen Southerners and their friends questioned his ility to make his policy that of the Republican ad- nistration, he had pointed to his influence over Gen- l Scott, the head of the army and, until recently, e chief of the coercionists.[3] To the doubting he was

[1] 2 Seward, 505.
[2] 2 Seward, 518.
[3] Gwin's recollections, 18 *Overland Monthly*, 2d series, 466.

able to show or quote a letter that the General a dressed to him on March 3d, as if the Secretary of Sta instead of the President were to decide how to deal wit secession.[1] In fact, had not Lincoln asked and accepte Seward's criticism upon the first written statement his prospective policy? And although Seward ha not been able to bar certain men from the Cabinet, ha he not been refused permission to withdraw becaus Lincoln's feelings and the public interest forbade it Sitting at the President's right at the Cabinet-tab with men who, as he had stated in writing, had n studied the question as he had, was it not a matte of course that his plans must prevail? The tendenci had not changed with the coming of Lincoln and th departure of Buchanan. Seward's numerous channe of influence and information, extending throughout th border slave states and to the very heart of the Co federacy, were still open. What he had accomplishe was, in his opinion, merely in preparation for the tim when the new administration could meet, with charit and patience, what was declared to be groundless fea when rewards and punishments could be substituted f warnings and promises, if nothing else sufficed. S Seward continued to think that the future depende upon his management.

[1] It seems likely that this letter was chiefly inspired by Seward. O sentence in it reads: "I beg leave to repeat in writing what I have l fore said to you orally." Although Scott mentioned four ways of de ing with the difficulties, he made it plain that he preferred the one th was popularly supposed to be Seward's, and he was almost hysteric ly opposed to what Seward most deprecated.—Scott's *Autobiograp* (1864), 625–28. There was a strong suspicion that Thurlow Weed h a hand in the matter. As has been noticed, both Seward and Greel drafted letters of acceptance for Scott in 1852. Near the end of 18 the old General published in London and Paris a very able and imp tant letter about the seizure of the *Trent*, every word of which w written by John Bigelow. For a discussion of the question of the timacy between Seward and Scott, see *post*, p. 124.

While the other members of the Cabinet were chiefly cupied with a few special questions, or were giving eir time to applicants for place, Seward's activity emed to extend in every direction and to touch all de-rtments. The day he took charge of his new office, he quested Stanton to draw up a nomination of Critten-n for the United States Supreme Court.[1] By means a prominent resident of Washington he kept up close mmunications with some of the unionist leaders in e Virginia state convention,[2] and despatched Lander the South to "kindle a 'backfire' against secession" Texas.[3] He telegraphed to Gilmer asking for recom-endations about appointing a marshal and a United ates attorney in North Carolina.[4] And by scores of ts he showed that he had time and energy for any sk, great or small, that came to his hand.

Before the middle of March, Gustavus V. Fox, former-an officer in the United States Navy, had somewhat nteracted the impression Scott, Anderson, and others d made upon the President. On March 15th Lincoln quested each member of the Cabinet to give a written inion on this question: "Assuming it to be possible w to provision Fort Sumter, under all the circum-nces is it wise to attempt it?"[5]

Seward's answer was given on the same day. It was mprehensive and direct, and as it contains the fullest planation he ever made of his policy, the leading pas-ges may well be quoted here:

"If it were possible to peacefully provision Fort Sumter,

[1] 2 Curtis's *Buchanan*, 528.
[2] Statement of Mr. F. W. Seward to the author.
[3] 3 Nicolay and Hay, 444; 2 Seward, 521.
[4] Gilmer to Seward, March 27th, Seward MSS.
[5] The striking contrast between this question and the promise in inaugural address "to hold, occupy, and possess the property and ces belonging to the government," seems to have been overlooked.

of course I should answer that it would be both unwise an inhuman not to attempt it. But the facts of the case a known to be that the attempt must be made with the em ployment of a military and marine force which woul provoke combat and probably initiate a civil war, whic the government of the United States would be committe to maintain through all changes to some definite co clusion."

As a citizen, he considered the Union necessary; as public official, he believed that it must be maintained all hazards. Yet next to disunion he regarded "civil wa as the most disastrous and deplorable of national calam ities." Therefore, he had studied how to save the Unio without war. He felt confident that secession wa based upon false reasoning and had been carried forwa in the seven states by means of artificial excitement as to overcome for the time the devotion to the Unio which he believed to be a "profound and permanen national sentiment," "even in South Carolina." Yet h was sure that this sentiment

"could, if encouraged, be ultimately relied upon to ral the people of the seceding states to reverse, upon due d liberation, all the popular acts of legislatures and conve tions by which they were hastily and violently committe to disunion.

"The policy of the time, therefore, has seemed to m to consist in conciliation, which should deny to disunio ists any new provocation or apparent offence, while would enable the Unionists in the slave states to mai tain with truth and with effect that the alarms and a prehensions put forth by the disunionists are groundl and false.

"I have not been ignorant of the objections that t administration was elected through the activity of t Republican party; that it must continue to deserve a retain the confidence of that party; while conciliati toward the slave states tends to demoralize the Republic party itself, on which party the main responsibility of ma taining the Union must rest.

"But it has seemed to me a sufficient answer—first, th

e administration could not demoralize the Republican rty without making some sacrifice of its essential princi-es, while no such sacrifice is necessary, or is anywhere thoritatively proposed; and secondly, if it be indeed true at pacification is necessary to prevent dismemberment the Union and civil war, or either of them, no patriot d lover of humanity could hesitate to surrender party r the higher interests of country and humanity.

"Partly by design, partly by chance, this policy has been therto pursued by the late administration of the Federal vernment, and by the Republican party in its corporate tion. It is by this policy, thus pursued, I think, that the ogress of dismemberment has been arrested after the seven lf states had seceded, and the border states yet remain, hough they do so uneasily, in the Union.

"It is to a perseverance in this policy for a short time nger that I look as the only peaceful means of assuring e continuance of Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina, entucky, Tennessee, Missouri, and Arkansas, or most of ose states in the Union. It is through their good and triotic offices that I look to see the Union sentiment re-red and brought once more into activity in the seceding tes, and through this agency those states themselves turning into the Union."

. . . . . .

"The fact, then, is that while the people of the border tes desire to be loyal, they are at the same time sadly, ough temporarily, demoralized by a sympathy for the ve states, which makes them forget their loyalty when-er there are any grounds for apprehending that the deral government will resort to military coercion against e seceding states, *even though such coercion should be nec-ary to maintain the authority, or even the integrity, of Union.*[1] This sympathy is unreasonable, unwise, and ngerous, and therefore cannot, if left undisturbed, be rmanent. It can be banished, however, only in one way, d that is by giving time for it to wear out, and for reason resume its sway. Time will do this, if it be not hindered new alarms and provocations."

. . . . . .

'The question submitted to us, then, practically is: Sup-ing it to be possible to reinforce and supply Fort Sumter.

[1] Not italicized in the original.

is it wise now to attempt it, instead of withdrawing th garrison?

"The most that could be done by any means now in ou hands would be to throw two hundred and fifty to fou hundred men into the garrison, with provisions for supply ing it five or six months. In this active and enlightene country, in this season of excitement, with a daily press daily mails, and an incessantly operating telegraph, th design to reinforce and supply the garrison must becom known to the opposite party at Charleston as soon at leas as preparation for it should begin. The garrison woul then almost certainly fall by assault before the expeditio could reach the harbor of Charleston. But supposing th secret kept, the expedition must engage in conflict on ente ing the harbor of Charleston; suppose it to be overpowere and destroyed, is that new outrage to be avenged, or are w then to return to our attitude of immobility? Should w be allowed to do so? Moreover, in that event, what become of the garrison?

"I suppose the expedition successful. We have then garrison in Fort Sumter that can defy assault for si months. What is it to do then? Is it to make war b opening its batteries and attempting to demolish the de fences of the Carolinians? Can it demolish them if i tries? If it cannot, what is the advantage we shall hav gained? If it can, how will it serve to check or preven disunion?

"In either case, it seems to me that we will have in augurated a civil war by our own act, without an adequat object, after which reunion will be hopeless, at least unde this administration, or in any other way than by a popula disavowal both of the war and of the administration whic unnecessarily commenced it. Fraternity is the element o union; war is the very element of disunion. Fraternity, practised by this administration, will rescue the Union fro all its dangers. If this administration, on the other hand take up the sword, then an opposite party will offer th olive branch, and will, as it ought, profit by the restoratio of peace and union."

. . . "I would not provoke war in any way *now*. I woul resort to force to protect the collection of revenue, becaus that is a necessary as well as legitimate public object. Eve then it should only be a naval force that I would emplo for that necessary purpose, while *I would defer militar action on land until a case should arise where we would ho*

e defensive.[1] In that case we should have the spirit of
e country and the approval of mankind on our side.
the other, we should peril peace and union, because
had not the courage to practise prudence and moder-
ion at the cost of temporary misapprehension. If this
unsel seem to be impassive and even unpatriotic, I con-
le myself by the reflection that it is such as Chatham
ve to his country under circumstances not widely dif-
rent."[2]

He still left unexplained the method and influences
which the slave states hesitating whether to sympa-
ize with the Confederacy or with the Federal govern-
ent were to be kept within their normal spheres. He
as even more vague as to the manner in which the
solute and ambitious new government was to be dealt
ith and finally dissolved. Yet, the logic of his answer
Lincoln's question, his opinions expressed at different
nes, the declared aims of those who were known to
his allies and confidants, and the plans of southern
nionists with whom he was in close communication
rnish a clear outline of the policy by which he ex-
cted to avert civil war and disunion.

As has been noticed, the first step was an attempt to
olish party lines and to unite those who believed the
eservation of the Union the most important considera-
on. This put in the background the aims of the radical
epublicans, and tended to soothe the fears of a majority
the voters of the South outside the cotton states, so
at they refused to rush precipitately into secession.
orth Carolina, Tennessee, Arkansas, and all the border
ave states had shown at least a temporary preference
r the old government. It was believed in many quar-
rs that the Confederacy could not long continue unless
e should win over several more states. In the contest
gain these middle states the Confederacy had a great

[1] Not italicized in the original.

[2] 5 *Works*, 606 ff.

advantage, but it was not so evident then as it is now. "Force," "coercion," "subjugation," were words of such frightful omen to most Southerners that little distinction was made in their meanings. Many Northerners, like Seward, tried to eliminate these words from all discussions, knowing how they would be used by secessionists. After the inauguration, the first aim was to strengthen the southern Unionists and make allies of them. Because the reprovisioning or the reinforcement of forts would be regarded as positive evidence of an intention to coerce the states, it must be avoided as much as coercion itself. The New York *Times* of March 21st said that the true policy of the administration was "unquestionably that of masterly inactivity"; that the object was "the conversion of the southern people from their secessionism." "Force, as a means of restoring the Union, or of permanently preserving it, is out of the question." Seward thought that the best evidence of the peaceful intentions of the administration would be the withdrawal of the troops from Fort Sumter. As a result it was expected that several of the loyal slave states would soon take a positive stand against secession. Then their influence would be felt by neighboring states, and, ultimately, by the Confederacy.[1] As late as April 10th, he expressed great confidence that a constitutional convention would remove the difficulties if all else should fail.[2]

Virginia, still the most important point, was to be used as the thin edge of the wedge. It was rumored that

[1] This idea is vaguely expressed in the opinion of March 15th. "He [Seward] could give me no good reason for supposing it, but he seemed to be quite convinced that, as soon as the states of Virginia, Kentucky, and Missouri rejected the appeals of the secessionists, as he has positive information they will reject them, the disintegration of the new-born Confederacy will begin."—"Diary of a Public Man," March 7th, 129 *North American Review*, 489.

[2] *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 1861, 74, 75.

Seward thought of going to Richmond to help forward the cause, for the state convention was still in session there.[1] But he sent a special agent, and then recommended to Lincoln that George W. Summers, the ablest of the Unionists there, should be made a Judge of the Supreme Court.[2] About the same time he told an editor of the Washington *National Intelligencer* that the troops would be withdrawn from Sumter, and he requested him to state the fact to Summers.[3]

A few days later Summers wrote: "The [report of the] removal from Sumter acted like a charm—it gave us great strength. A reaction is now going on in the state. The outside pressure has greatly subsided." It was then supposed that a convention of the loyal slave states would be called at Frankfort or Nashville,[4] and that the conditions of remaining in the Union would there be formulated and subsequently brought to the consideration of the other states.[5] Seward expected that a national convention would soon follow, where an agreement would be reached by all the loyal states.[6] The

[1] New York *Times*, March 8th. [2] 3 Nicolay and Hay, 423.

[3] 29 New York *Nation*, 383, 384. The intermediary was the late J. C. Welling, subsequently president of Columbian University.

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] Summers's speech of March 11th, in the Virginia convention. Semi-Weekly Richmond *Enquirer*, March 25th.

[6] The "Diary," etc., of March 12th, records another interview with Seward. "He has news from Richmond, and I understood him from Mr. Summers, that the prospect of defeating the secessionists in the convention brightens all the time, and that Virginia, after disposing finally of the importunities of the southern states, will take the initiative for a great national convention. Of this he feels as confident as of the complete overthrow of the schemes of the fire-eaters by the quiet evacuation of Fort Sumter, which cannot now be long delayed." . . .

"He is hopeful of the success of the convention plan if we can but get the better of our own mischief-makers here, who are much more dangerous to us, he thinks—and I agree with him—than the people at Montgomery."—129 *North American Review*, 495.

The *Evening Journal* of March 22d said: "In proposing a national

New York *Times*, which was the frankest exponent of this policy, urged editorially, March 21st, that the efforts of the Union men ought to be recognized, that documents explaining the true position of the administration should be scattered throughout the South, and that the patronage, influence, and power of the government should be used to build up a Union party in every southern state. These were exactly the lines on which Seward was working.[1]

To what extent was the sovereignty of the United States to be suspended in the Confederacy during the practice of this "Fabian policy, which concedes nothing, yet which employs no force in support of resisted Federal authority?"[2] It was here that optimistic theories and negotiations had to give way to facts and practical administration. Excepting some phases of the purely military question, all the considerations that Seward had urged for the evacuation of Fort Sumter applied with nearly equal force to Fort Pickens. Even from a military point of view, the difference, which was chiefly one of time and degree, would disappear with the carrying out of Seward's plan. His method of dealing with secession was surprisingly like Buchanan's.[3]

convention of the states, Governor Seward, as on many former occasions, saw farther and more clearly into the future than his congressional associates, most of whom repudiated the suggestion. . . . That sentiment is now toning up to the idea. Some states have met it with their approval. Our own will do so. We may look forward, therefore, to a period when, passion subsiding, irritation soothed, and the popular mind tranquillized, wholesome results may flow from the deliberation of a national council."

[1] A letter from Samuel Hooper, dated Boston, February 18, 1861, showed that on Seward's suggestion he had collected one thousand dollars for the distribution of documents in the border slave states.—Seward MSS.

[2] *Tribune*, March 27, 1861.

[3] See the paragraph beginning "Partly by design," in the opinion of March 15th; also 129 *North American Review*, 127, 128, 133, 489.

The attitude of each meant a waiving of sovereign rights, a voluntary paralysis in administration, and the acceptance of whatever might be necessary to avoid war. The prejudices and fears of the Southerners must be allowed to wear off in quiet, although at the expense of not using the force "necessary to maintain the authority, or even the integrity of the Union," as he indicated on March 15th. Of course he expected that a reaction would be brought about in some manner before "the integrity of the Union" was destroyed.

Of the six other members of the Cabinet, Postmaster-General Blair alone positively favored provisioning Sumter, on the ground that evacuation would demoralize Northern Unionists and encourage southern secessionists, while even defeat would unite and inspire the North.[1] Chase, the Secretary of the Treasury, answered Lincoln's question affirmatively, but said that he would advise against trying to provision Sumter, "if the attempt will so inflame civil war as to involve an immediate necessity for the enlistment of armies and the expenditure of millions." The Secretary of War, Simon Cameron, considered the question in its military aspects, and, leaning upon the adverse opinions of the army officers, he opposed the attempt to relieve the fort. Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy, answered in the negative, after a review of both the military and the political considerations. Caleb B. Smith, the Secretary of the Interior, supported Seward in his view of the difficulty of the undertaking and of the slight advantage of it, even if successful. He thought that it would cause the administration to appear to take the aggressive and to begin a civil war. To Attorney-General Bates the question was one of expediency merely, and his opinion as to the military inutility and the political danger of making the at-

[1] 2 Lincoln's *Works*, 14–22, gives the various opinions.

tempt still more closely resembled Seward's. Much lik
Seward, also, he said: "A reaction has already begu
[in the seceding states], and if encouraged by wise, mo
erate, and firm measures on the part of the governmen
I persuade myself that the nation will be restored to i
integrity without the effusion of blood." But, unlike a
others on his side, he urged that, as a counter-balanc
to the loss of Sumter, "the more southern forts, Pic
ens, Key West, etc., should, without delay, be put i
condition of easy defence against all assailants; an
that the whole coast, from South Carolina to Texa
should be as well guarded as the power of the nav
will enable us."

The replies showed that Seward's policy — so calle
because he was its exponent, if not its author — ha
won support. Blair still persistently advocated energeti
measures, as was expected by all who knew him. Chas
seemed to be less firm, although it was well known tha
a large majority of the Republicans in the Senate, the
in executive session, sympathized with him in oppositio
to the Secretary of State. Backed by the highest mil
tary opinion, by the Attorney-General, by the Secr
taries of War, the Navy, and the Interior, Seward
confidence was strengthened.

Lincoln took the manuscript opinions and—continue
to be non-committal. On the same day, Seward wro
home: "This President proposes to do all his own work.
Not until the 18th did Lincoln call upon Bates, Chas
and Welles for opinions and facts that indicated that h
was considering the question of using a naval force t
collect custom duties or to blockade ports in the Co
federacy.[1] About the same time Captain Fox was sen
to Charleston so that he could better judge as to th
practicability of his plan of relieving Sumter. A fe

[1] 2 Lincoln's *Works*, 24, 25.

days later Lincoln requested one of his old Illinois friends, S. A. Hurlbut, to visit the same city and report if there was a suppressed Union sentiment there, as Seward had maintained. Ward H. Lamon, once a law-partner and for many years an intimate friend of the President, accompanied Hurlbut. Major Anderson's opinion was stronger than ever against attempting to provision Sumter, while Fox became more convinced of the feasibility of providing relief. Hurlbut reported that J. L. Petigru, a distinguished lawyer, was the only man in Charleston that continued to express adherence to the Union, that there was "positively nothing to appeal to." Lamon wrote to Seward that he was "satisfied of the policy and propriety of immediately evacuating Fort Sumter."[1]

Meantime a collateral question had arisen. On February 27th, Martin J. Crawford, John Forsyth, and A. B. Roman had been appointed commissioners of the Confederacy to the United States. Their chief task was to obtain a recognition of the independence of their government. In case the President of the United States should refuse to receive them or open negotiations, but should be willing to refer the subject to the Senate, they were instructed to accede. Or if he should propose to withhold a reply to their communication until Congress should assemble and pronounce a decision in the premises, they were to oppose no obstacle, "provided, in either case, you receive from the President of the United

[1] "I talked with Major Anderson privately for an hour and a half. He and his men are in fine spirits, but as to their spirits, I am satisfied from their very appearance that they would be buoyant if they knew there would be a necessity for blowing up the fort in the next half-hour—which they would do before they would surrender it.

"From the best lights that I can judge from, after casting around, *I am satisfied of the policy and propriety of immediately evacuating Fort Sumter.*"—Charleston, March 25th. Seward MSS.

States assurances, which to you will seem sufficient, that the existing peaceful status as between the two countries shall be rigidly maintained, and that no attempt shall be made, under any pretext whatever, by the Government of the United States, to exercise any jurisdiction, whether civil or military, within the limits of the Confederacy."[1] It was of the greatest importance that they should secure the maintenance of the existing status pending negotiations.[2] Crawford reached Washington before Buchanan had left the White House, but too late to begin any negotiations with him.

Within a few hours after Lincoln's inauguration Samuel Ward informed Seward that Crawford would immediately apply for a reception; that if he should go back unacknowledged as commissioner, President Davis could not hold the people from attacking the forts; that "Gwin and Hunter think the question had best be referred to the Senate. They say it is a risk you must take." Then he speculated on how the Senate would vote, and added that Dr. Gwin desired to see Seward at Ward's house the following day.[3] Seward met Gwin at least once during the next few days, and assured him of the determination of the administration to settle the question between the two governments in an amicable manner.

On March 6th Crawford sent Toombs a long despatch describing what he understood to be Seward's ideas and plans.[5] It had been arranged that Seward should le

[1] These conditions will be referred to later.

[2] Instructions of the Confederate Secretary of State, Robert Toombs, to the commissioners, February 27, 1861. The original records of this commission are in the Treasury Department.

[3] See Appendix K. [4] 18 *Overland Monthly*, 2d series, 469.

[5] "The President himself is really not aware of the condition of the country, and his Secretaries of State and War are to open the difficulties and dangers to him in Cabinet meeting to day." . . .

"The construction which he [Seward] attempts to put upon the inaugural is, that it only follows the language of every President fro

him know that afternoon when and in what manner the subject-matter of the mission should be brought forward and submitted for the consideration of the President and Cabinet. On the 8th the commissioners reported that they had availed themselves of the services of "a late distinguished Senator of the United States"—undoubtedly Gwin—to establish an understanding with the Secretary. They were confident that Seward was eager for delay.[1] They could "travel the same path" with

Washington down, wherein Mr. Lincoln pledges himself to 'the execution of the laws,' and states that it was necessary to prevent utter ruin to the party and the administration itself. Touching the collection of the revenues, he had an eye more to the ports outside than inside the Confederate States, and expresses apprehension if he had not declared his purpose in that regard that New York and San Francisco might at any time for any reason refuse to pay over the customs.

"As to the words 'hold, occupy, and possess the property and places belonging to the government,' he says that, with all else in the document, is to be considered in connection with the qualification wherein the President says, 'Doing this I deem it to be only a simple duty on my part; and I shall perform it so far as practicable, unless my rightful masters the American people shall withhold the requisite means, or in some authoritative manner direct the contrary,' which in effect, as well as purpose, was to submit the question to the judgment of the country in some satisfactory form." . . .

. . . "To cover the whole ground of his policy, it is to keep persons from without from engaging in this contest, and as rapidly as possible disaffect our own population to the point of war upon our government, and then, with small forces of Federal troops and meagre moneyed appropriations from the U. S. Treasury, 'conquer a peace.'" In advancing this policy the party in power was to drop the name Republican, ignore the word slavery, and merge everything into the Union cause and a Union party.

[1] They represented Seward as follows: "The tenor of his language is to this effect: I have built up the Republican party; I have brought it to triumph; but its advent to power is accompanied by great difficulties and perils. I must save the party and save the government in its hands. To do this, war must be averted; the negro question must be dropped; the 'irrepressible conflict' ignored; and a Union party to embrace the border slave states inaugurated. I have already whipped Mason and Hunter in their own state. I must crush out Davis and Toombs and their colleagues in sedition in

him up to "the point of fixing peace as the policy of th Lincoln government." Until pacific negotiations shoul be reached, it was "unimportant what may be his sub sequent hopes and plans."

Their "agent" was instructed to represent it as hi opinion that the commissioners were "ready to accep war," and could not admit of delay while the flag of th United States was flying over Forts Sumter and Picken and while ships and troops seemed to be preparing fo hostilities, unless the most reliable guaranty shoul be received. It was reported that Seward replie that the administration could not then act upon s important a question; for it was "besieged by appli cants," "surrounded by all the difficulties and confusio incident to the first days of a new government," an the pressure of hordes of the most radical Republican gave an advantage to his opponents in the party. There fore, if compelled to take a stand then, he could no answer for the result. It required no great clevernes on the part of the commissioners to see that their bes chance lay in playing boldly when Seward was ham pered and fearful. So, by their direction, as the complacently reported, the agent told Seward, muc as Ward had done a few days before, that "withou proper assurances we [the commission] should be boun to precipitate the issue at once upon the administratio and force it to define its policy. Would he give suc assurances? It was finally agreed that the agent shoul bring to Mr. Seward a memorandum stating the term upon which we would consent to, and stipulate for, brief respite."[1]

Accordingly, the agent called at the Department o

their respective states. Saving the border states to the Union b moderation and justice, the people of the cotton states, unwillingl led into secession, will rebel against their leaders, and reconstructio will follow."

[1] Commissioners to Toombs, March 8th.

State at nine o'clock on the morning of the 8th with the memorandum. It stated that the commissioners would agree to postpone the consideration of the subject of their mission for a period not exceeding twenty days, provided that the existing military status should be preserved in every respect.[1] The commissioners imagined that Seward would soon be in their trap; for, as they wrote to Toombs, "the signing of the mutual agreement and stipulations contained in the memorandum would be a virtual recognition of us as the representatives of a power entitled to be treated with by this government."[2] Unfortunately for them, the Secretary was not at the Department, but at home, and too ill to transact any business. Here this intermediary dropped out.

Seward soon recovered, and Senator Hunter became the go-between.[3] The commissioners represented to their

[1] This referred to Fort Pickens as much as to Fort Sumter.

[2] *Ibid.;* Crawford, 323.

[3] Gwin was the only "late distinguished Senator of the United States" with whom Seward is known to have had dealings of this character, and Gwin's recollections (18 *Overland Monthly*, 469) show that he quit the negotiations at exactly the point the "agent" did—*i. e.*, when Seward's illness interfered, which was on the 8th. Crawford (*Genesis, etc.*, 322) and Rhodes (vol. iii., p. 328) erroneously speak of Hunter as if he were the intermediary in the effort to have Seward agree to the memorandum. These sentences from the commissioners' despatch of March 12th should have precluded such an inference: "At the date of our last communication we were awaiting the convalescence of Mr. Seward. He was at the State Department on Monday (yesterday), when we proposed to place in his hands the memorandum of terms of delay, a copy of which has been transmitted to you. The gentleman who was to carry it had, however, left the city; and feeling unwilling to lose time in waiting for him, we availed ourselves of the kind consent of Senator Hunter, of Virginia, to see Mr. Seward and learn if he would consent to an informal interview with us."

It is not strange that Gwin was inaccurate as to the date and some other minor features. Many years after the incident occurred he saw reference in Jefferson Davis's *Confederate Government* to a call that "a distinguished Senator" made March 11th on Seward in behalf of

government that Seward was "perceptibly embarrassed and uneasy" when Hunter appeared at the Department of State, March 11th; for the Secretary "seemed to apprehend the formal presentation of the issue we have in charge." Because it was believed that the evacuation of Sumter was certain, the commissioners concluded to drop the demand for the preservation of the military status and to insist on an informal interview. In reply, Seward said that before he could consent, he would have to consult the President, and that he would give Hunter an answer the next day.[1] As agreed, he wrote, March 12th: "It will not be in my power to receive the gentlemen of whom we spoke yesterday. You will please explain to them that this decision proceeds solely on public grounds, and not from any want of personal respect."[2] Again Confederate hopes were blasted.

The commissioners seem to have concluded that Seward was not to be caught with a pin-hook, and that

the commissioners, and supposed the reference was to himself, for he had never heard of Hunter's services. See 18 *Overland Monthly*, 465.

[1] Commissioners to Toombs, March 12th.

[2] This entry of March 7th, in the "Diary of a Public Man," says of Seward: "He seemed inclined to think that a mode might be found of receiving them and negotiating with them, without in any way committing the government to a recognition of the government which they assume to represent.

"*I found it difficult, indeed I may say impossible, to make him admit the hopelessness of looking for such a thing*—[not italicized in the original]—but I told him frankly that I saw no earthly reason why he should not informally and in a private way obtain from these gentlemen—all of them, as he knew, honorable and very intelligent men—some practical light on the way out of all this gathering perplexity if, indeed, they have any such practical light to give. He then gave me to understand that this was exactly what he had done and meant to do, and he repeated his conviction that the evacuation of Fort Sumter would clear the way for a practical understanding out of which an immediate tranquillization of the country must come, and in the not distant future a return of all the seceding states to their allegiance."—129 *North American Review*, 490.

heir dignity demanded a formal announcement of their resence in Washington and a request for an official udience, so as to state the object of their mission. uch a communication was left at the Department of tate on March 13th, with the statement that an answer ould be called for on the next day. When the secretary f the commission came for the answer, he was told that ime had not been found to prepare it, but that its rompt delivery at the hotel of the commissioners might e relied on. As it did not come, the secretary went to he department, on the 15th, to learn the cause of the elay. He was told that a reply was then preparing.[1]

The immediate rejection of the request of the commis- ioners seemed inevitable. Whenever it should come, hey would have to withdraw. Then the channel of eaceful communication between the two governments ould close and warlike demonstrations must soon fol- ow. This would mark the end and utter failure of eward's policy. Unless he could control the patience f the commissioners it would be impossible for him to arry out his plans. This prospect must have been most ainful. In his whole public career there was nothing which he had clung so fondly. He had a great repu- ation as a political seer, and his pride did not lag behind is reputation.

While still distressed by the dilemma, on March 15th, ustice Nelson, of the United States Supreme Court, id before him some opinions to the effect that there ere serious constitutional objections to the employ- ent of coercive measures. Shortly afterward Nelson et his colleague, Justice John A. Campbell, and took im to Seward, hoping that he might help to overcome he immediate difficulties. Twelve years later Camp- ell described what occurred at the department: the

[1] Commissioners to Toombs, March 22d.

Justices urged Seward to receive the commissioners Seward regretted his inability to do so, and asked them to see Lincoln, Bates, and Blair; he was confident that Jefferson Davis would not have sent the commissioners if he had known the true state of affairs; and he declared further that the evacuation of Sumter was as much as the administration could bear at one time Campbell saw the force of the suggestion as to Sumter Seward assured him, when he spoke of writing to Davis and of speaking to the commissioners, that Sumter would be evacuated before a letter could reach Montgomery and that no action was contemplated as to the forts in the Gulf of Mexico.[1]

Accordingly, Campbell immediately reported to the commissioners Seward's desire to preserve the peace and left with them a written statement expressing "perfect confidence" that Sumter would be "evacuated in the next five days"; "that no measure changing the existing status of things prejudicially to the Southern Confederate States is at present contemplated"; that an immediate demand for an answer to their communication would "be productive of evil and not of good"; and had asked for a delay of ten days until the effect of the evacuation of Fort Sumter could be ascertained.[2] Of course the commissioners understood that Campbell obtained his information from Seward; in fact, all concerned must have known that there was no other source for such assurances.

Heretofore it has sometimes been claimed that Campbell said more to the commissioners than he was authorized to do, and that Seward knew nothing about it. There is no basis for the claim. Only a few hours after Campbell, who was acting at Seward's request, received his instructions, he reported that he had told Crawford

[1] Crawford, 327, 328.

[2] Crawford, 330.

hat no measure changing the existing status of things ejudicially to the Confederate States is at present con-nplated by the administration."[1] It was thoroughly derstood on all sides that the Confederacy would vio-ıtly resist any attempt to reinforce United States oops at any point within the claimed boundary of the ven seceded states. Notwithstanding Scott's order the 12th to reinforce Fort Pickens, this assurance vered that fort as much as Fort Sumter or any ners.

All parties concerned liked the new arrangement; so s peculiar intercourse continued. On March 16th mpbell, understanding Seward's anxiety about an an-er to the note of the commissioners, followed up his

"I saw Judge Crawford, after leaving you to-day," Campbell te to Seward, March 15, 1861, "and communicated to him that I entire confidence that Fort Sumter would be evacuated in five s, and that no measure changing the existing status of things preju-ally to the Confederate States is at present contemplated by the inistration.

'That these conclusions imposed great responsibility upon the inistration, and that this responsibility would be injuriously reased by any demand for an answer to the communication of commissioners of the Confederate States, and insisted that an wer should not be requested until the effect of the evacuation Fort Sumter on the public mind should be ascertained, and, at events, that nothing be done for ten days. Judge Crawford eed to my proposal, but said Mr. Forsyth's concurrence was essary. Mr. F. could not be found, and it was agreed that as n as he could be consulted that Judge C. would address me a note o the result.

'I have not yet heard from him.

'I think that you need not concern yourself to make an answer for present. As soon as I hear from the commissioners, I will inform

Judge C. preferred to conduct the correspondence with General is, and I shall not (probably) write to the latter on the subject. utioned Judge C. not to speak of our intercourse, and not to ex-s any surmise as to the source from which my assurances were ved. I did not mention any name to him."—Seward MSS.

report to Seward with these lines: "The commissione have sent a telegram to Montgomery in order to obta permission to do as desired. An answer will, probabl be received to-day. Nothing will be expected from yo to-day on their part."[1] As anticipated, Toombs tel graphed the commissioners to "wait a reasonable tim and then ask instructions."

At the expiration of the five days within whic Sumter was to be evacuated, Campbell was requested make inquiries about the delay. On March 21st he co ferred with Seward and again gave the commissioners written statement that his "confidence" was "unabated as to the facts stated on March 15th; 2d, that no pr udicial movement to the South is contemplated as r spects Fort Pickens. I shall be able to speak positive to-morrow afternoon."[2] After a long consultation wi Seward, on March 22d, Campbell made a third reco of his "unabated confidence" that there was no grou for distrust as to Sumter, and that the condition of thin at Fort Pickens was not to be altered prejudicially the Confederacy. He advised against making any d mands upon the United States, and said he should ha knowledge of any change in the existing status. H memorandum was shown to Seward before it was d livered: therefore Fort Pickens was expressly cover by the pledge.[3] Justice Nelson was present at ea of the three interviews; Campbell showed the sta ments to him and obtained his sanction before givi them to the commissioners. Campbell published the

[1] Seward MSS.

[2] Campbell's statement, printed in Crawford, 331. Campbell, well as the commissioners, seems to have become somewhat suspicio for he took Justice Nelson with him for his "protection against treachery of Secretary Seward and such other members of the Cabi as he sees," as Toombs was informed.—Commissioners to Toom March 22d.

[3] Crawford, 331, 332.

cts only a few weeks later.[1] Nelson's loyalty would ve made it morally obligatory to deny Campell's ac- unt if it had not been correct.

On March 24th the Russian Minister called upon com- issioner Roman and reported the following as the sub- ance of a conversation with Seward the day before: coercion or blockade, the Secretary had said, would attempted; the seceding states would be allowed to llect the duties at their custom-houses, but the expense their post-offices ought to be paid out of this revenue; hoped those states, if allowed to act quietly, would trace their steps, and return to the Union, but if they rsisted they should be permitted to depart in peace; had to fight the ultra-Republicans, but he was gain- g ground and his policy would finally prevail. Could t an informal meeting with Roman be arranged for m at the Russian legation? Seward and the Minister reed that taking a cup of tea there two evenings later ould furnish the best opportunity. Roman gladly ac- pted the suggestion.[2] The next morning Seward sent s regrets; and subsequently told the Minister that, ter much reflection, he had declined, because he was raid that the meeting might become known to the wspapers. The commissioners believed that it was cause Seward was apprehensive of Horace Greeley, o had just arrived in Washington.[3] They advised that e strongest possible force should be presented at Fort ckens, so that there would be an "*excuse*" for its acuation. They did not believe that the forts would reinforced at the risk of a conflict. But it was still a estion whether the administration was more afraid of e Confederate States or of the radical Republicans.[4]

[1] McPherson's *Rebellion*, 110.
[2] Roman to Toombs, March 25th. See note to p. 135 *post*.
[3] Commissioners to Toombs, March 26th.
[4] Ibid.

Until the last days of March, Seward's influence ov
the administration seemed to be undisturbed. Althoug
Lincoln had not adopted his recommendations, he
carefully avoided direct antagonism to them that Sewa
and his friends—as well as Jefferson Davis[1]—continu
to believe that they would prevail. What did the stat
at this time—near the end of March—indicate as to t
efficiency of Seward's plan and methods if they shou
be allowed full sway? A fair point from which
judge them should be gained by a careful examinati
of these three questions:

1. How did the Confederates regard and expect
meet his policy?

2. What conditions did the southern Unionists p
upon its acceptance?

3. What did Seward's closest friends, and other R
publicans, think of the outlook?

1. With profound complacency the Confederates
garded Seward as their cat's-paw. "I have felt it n
duty under instructions from your department, as w
as from my best judgment," Crawford wrote to Toomb
March 6th, "to adopt and support Mr. Seward's polic
upon condition, however, that the present status is
be rigidly maintained. His reasons and my own, it
proper to say, are as wide apart as the poles: he is ful
persuaded that peace will bring about a reconstructi
of the Union, whilst I feel confident that it will build
and cement our confederacy and put us beyond the rea
either of his arms or of his diplomacy." "It is w
that he should indulge in dreams which we know a
not to be realized," Forsyth and Crawford complace
ly said, two days later. Because the Confederates we
living under their own laws and were levying tribu
upon the North, the commissioners felt that a contin

[1] Toombs to commissioners, April 2d.

nce of quiet would be most conducive to a solidification f their government and to preparation for any emer- ency; while it would tend to give them character, ower, and influence abroad.[1] The evacuation of Forts umter and Pickens would be *pro tanto* a recognition of ndependence. Obtaining Fort Pickens might be a work f time. "Still, invest the latter as Sumter was and it oon becomes a necessity." Crawford pointed out that, y procuring from Seward a pledge not to change the tatus, the Confederate States had won a great advan- age, for they "were not bound in any way whatever to bserve the same course toward it"—the United States. We think, then, that the policy of 'masterly inactivity,' n our part, was wise in every particular."[2] As late as April 2d, the Confederate Secretary of State wrote to the ommissioners: "It is a matter of no importance to us hat motives may induce the adoption of Mr. Seward's olicy by his government. We are satisfied that it will edound to our advantage, and, therefore, care little for Ir. Seward's calculations as to its future effect upon the onfederate States." At the same time Toombs instruct- d the commissioners not to agree to maintain the present tatus except upon the condition that the United States roops should be withdrawn from both Sumter and Pick- ns. From the beginning these forts were linked to- ether for war or peace.[3] This soon became apparent.

The commissioners had asked their government if dur- ng negotiations it would be practicable to collect the ame duties as were required by the laws of the United tates rather than by those of the Confederacy. March

[1] Commissioners, March 26th. [2] Crawford to Toombs, April 1st.

[3] On February 15th, a resolution of the Confederate Congress ex- ressed the opinion "that immediate steps should be taken to obtain ossession of Forts Sumter and Pickens, by the authority of this gov- nment, either by negotiations or force, as early as practicable."— *War Records*, 258.

14th, Toombs answered: "The government of the Con federate States can never agree that negotiations shal be made dependent on the non-execution of our own laws. . . . Not even to avert war can we ever consen to suspend the operation of the laws which we are bound to execute." In a separate despatch of March 29th Roman expressed hopes that Seward would, "before long, return to his idea of having an informal interview with us, and that some plan, not for a final treaty o peace—he dares not go so far—but for a truce or ces sation of hostilities, perhaps until the meeting of th next Congress, may be agreed upon."

If the Confederates understood the needs of their own government, Seward's expectations were to be disap pointed—unless he had some plan in reserve.

2. John A. Gilmer, of North Carolina, and George W Summers, of Virginia, probably stood closer to Sewar than any other Southerners not Republicans. Gilme indicated his belief that, in order to save the Unionist in the southern states from being "swept away in a to rent of madness," it would be necessary to withdraw th troops from all the fortifications in the Confederacy an leave the revenue laws unenforced, so as to avoid resort to arms.[1] He thought that most of the state could be won back in less than two years. Likewis Judge Summers, in his great Union speech before th Virginia convention, maintained that there was neithe cause nor power to retake the lost forts; that there wa no way for the United States to collect the customs i the seceded states; that we were "bound to accept s cession as an existing fact," for the seven states ha "formed a new confederacy" and were "now perfor ing the functions of an independent government.

[1] For Gilmer's letters to Seward, see Appendix L.

[2] At the same time he said he would regard that statesman as "n row and unphilosophical" who should consider the action of th

loreover, the report of the committee on Federal re-tions had already indicated that more than half the embers of the convention were practically defensive lies of the Confederacy.[1] Throughout March those ho called themselves Unionists or conservatives held e immediate secessionists in check; but it was the task Sisyphus, and every day the burden grew heavier. ot even one hint has been found, in the many letters ey wrote to Seward, that they would remain loyal if e Confederacy should be resisted. Lincoln's sarcastic clamation—"Yes! your Virginia people are good nionists, but it is always with an *if!*"[2]—was a perfect aracterization of their attitude. And, as a matter of ct, those whom Lincoln so accurately called Seward d Weed's "white crows" soon became Confederates. et Seward expected such broken reeds to be the uthern pillars of the Union!

3. The commissioners had frequently reported that e peace party at the North was growing. An edi-rial article in the New York *Times* of March 21st said at "there is a growing sentiment throughout the North favor of letting the Gulf States go." Every week of iet strengthened conservatives and abolitionists in the lief that it would be better to say, "Wayward sisters, part in peace," than to risk the perils of a civil war. either the *Times* nor the *Evening Journal* accepted this ew, but both papers suggested that an extra session of ngress would be a prerequisite of adopting a policy

es as insurrectionary. He announced that the news received from shington that morning [presumably from Seward *per* Welling] re-ved all doubt about a pacific policy and the evacuation of Sumter. hese states must be left to time, to their experiment, to negotiation, entreaty, to sisterly kindness."—Speech of March 11, 1861, Semi-ekly Richmond *Enquirer*, March 25th.

American Annual Cyclopædia, 1861, 732–34.

1 *Southern Historical Papers*, 446.

of active resistance to secession.[1] Gilmer urged Sewar March 12th, to draw up a proclamation throwing upo Buchanan's administration the blame for the conditio of affairs. To this Seward replied that the suggestio were "judicious."[2] There had been a very marked chang of attitude since the previous winter, when the *Evenin Journal* denounced Buchanan for not pursuing a vigoro policy. The almost free-trade tariff of the Confederac had so demoralized importation at the North that th *Times* said, on March 30th: "With us it is no longer a abstract question—one of constitutional construction, of reserved or delegated powers of the state or Feder government, but of material existence and moral pos tion both at home and abroad." Douglas and most the Democrats were known to be in favor of withdra ing the troops from both Sumter and Pickens, and reco nizing as a fact what had taken place. The Republica Senators became more and more impatient, and Trur bull finally introduced a resolution declaring that th true way to preserve the Union was to enforce in all th states the laws of the Union.[3]

So, as yet there was no sign of the refluent wave th was expected to sweep back into the Union its dismer bered parts: in fact, all the appearances indicated th Seward's plans, as far as announced, were wholly inad quate to save or restore the integrity of the nation.

[1] In a very significant editorial article on "Peaceful Secessio March 23d, the *Evening Journal* said that there should be no sheddi of blood "by the general government, if it have not the needed force carry on the war which the shedding of blood would initiate." As l as April 3d, a leading article in the *Times* said: "If he [the Preside decides to enforce the laws, let him call Congress together and dema the means of doing it."

[2] See Appendix L, letter of April 11th. [3] *Globe*, 1860–61, 1519.

CHAPTER XXIX

SEWARD'S STRUGGLE FOR SUPREMACY

On March 28th the Senate adjourned. This promised
relieve the administration from criticism in that quar-
r. The New York *Tribune* of that morning contained
sensational despatch dated the previous day in Wash-
gton, disclosing the fact that an order, which was
cott's, had been sent a fortnight before, to reinforce
ort Pickens with the four hundred troops on the *Brook-*
n. On this 28th of March, also, expired the twenty-day
lay, to which the commissioners had been authorized
consent. By this time, too, the conclusions of Fox,
urlbut, and Lamon had become known. Hence it was
be expected that the administration would soon pub-
ly and definitively announce its policy. Late that
ening Lincoln called the members of his Cabinet into
nsultation to inform them that General Scott had rec-
mmended that Fort Pickens as well as Fort Sumter
ould be evacuated. Lincoln showed considerable emo-
on in making the announcement. A painful silence
llowed, until Blair began to denounce Scott for "play-
g politician," and not acting as a general should in
commending the surrender of a fort that was regard-
l as impregnable. Those present understood that the
marks were aimed at Seward; and in after years both
lair and Welles recorded their belief that Scott was
ting as Seward's decoy.[1]

[1] 3 Nicolay and Hay, 394, 395; Welles, 58, 60, 65.

Owing to the intimacy between Scott and Seward, i was assumed that Scott's recommendation was reall Seward's, adroitly and tentatively made in this way i order to avoid hazarding the Secretary of State's influ ence with the administration.

A continuation of peace was the prerequisite of suc cess for Seward's policy. His attitude toward For Sumter was such as to warrant the belief that he woul also favor the evacuation of Fort Pickens, if necessar to the avoidance of an outbreak. Since 1839, whe Scott was used by Weed and Seward as a means to de feat the nomination of Clay,[1] the man whom the cou try admired as a soldier and ridiculed as a politicia had been repeatedly employed by the shrewd New Yor leaders as a means of carrying out their plans. I 1851–52 it was notorious that Scott was under the in fluence of their political mesmerism. During the winte of 1860–61 Seward and Scott were working like han in glove. Gwin explained how Seward cited Scott change of attitude as evidence of the strength of th policy of peace. The letter of March 3, 1861, to Sewar was thoroughly unconventional and suspicious. It sai that to "conquer the seceded states" would require a army of three hundred thousand men, two hundred an fifty million dollars, and a garrison of thirty-five tho sand men to protect Washington. Within three day this opinion was quoted to Toombs by the commissio ers, with the unimportant error of naming two hundre and fifty thousand men instead of three hundred tho sand. The information was exactly in line with wha Seward wanted the Confederate leaders at Montgomer to know. Welles subsequently asserted that when th Sumter question first came before the new Cabine Seward recommended that it be referred to Scott an

[1] 2 Schurz's *Clay*, 178.

hat his report be conclusive; and that Seward was, as et, the only member who was aware that Scott had eased to be a coercionist.[1] On the night of the 5th of Iarch, Scott wrote for the President an opinion in entire armony with Seward's ideas as to evacuating Sumter, nd about the truce regarding Fort Pickens, entered into etween the previous administration and some of the onfederates.[2] On March 6th Seward carried it away om the White House, before the President had ex-nined it,[3] and lent it to Stanton to be shown to Dix.[4] n the 7th Lincoln requested Seward to return the paper o that he could study it. On March 5th, also, the Pres-ent had requested General Scott to use "all possible gilance for the maintenance of all the places." On he 9th he learned that nothing had been done toward einforcing Fort Pickens; so, on the 11th, he put the rder in writing.[5] Welles has recorded that on that day cott was very eager to have a naval vessel—because erland communications were unreliable—take an army fficer who should be bearer of a despatch instructing aptain Vogdes, of the *Brooklyn*, lying off the harbor Pensacola, to disembark his men so as to strengthen ort Pickens; but that by the evening of the 12th cott had lost his "earnest zeal" and had concluded at it would suffice to send merely a written order to ogdes. So this was done on March 12th.[6] It is hard-conceivable that Seward did not know of this order. It has been noticed that on March 11th Seward en-uraged Hunter to believe that he would receive the mmissioners, and how, when he had to withdraw this couragement, he soon gave Campbell assurances that ere was no intention to change the status. This, with

[1] Welles, 59.
[2] 3 Nicolay and Hay, 378. MS. kindly shown by Colonel Nicolay.
[3] 2 Lincoln's *Works*, 8.
[4] 2 Curtis's *Buchanan*, 529.
[5] 3 Nicolay and Hay, 393.
[6] Welles, 59, 60.

reassurances at different times, kept the Confederate unaggressive for two weeks. The *Tribune's* disclosur of March 28th about the order to reinforce Fort Picken was undoubtedly known to Seward and Scott before th hour when Scott made his startling recommendation t evacuate that fort. Whether this recommendation wa the result of fear lest the report of Scott's order migh precipitate a war cannot be affirmed; it is only certai that the report did not precipitate hostilities because i was immediately discredited. It is certain that by th evening of March 28th Seward knew that his repeate assertions that there was no intention to change th status were incorrect. Therefore, he was bound either t tell Campbell the truth or so to counteract the possibl effects of the order to reinforce Fort Pickens as to mak the change of status not "prejudicial" to the Confe eracy. This could be done by inducing the Federa government to evacuate Fort Pickens.

But there is still another mysterious thread. It shoul be remembered that Lincoln was calm in the belief tha Vogdes had landed the troops according to Scott's o der of the 12th and that Fort Pickens was absolutel safe. If Seward and Scott had no more informatio than others about affairs at Fort Pickens, they mus have held the same opinion. As a matter of fact, th commandant had disobeyed Scott's instructions on th ground that they did not come from an official of su ficient rank to countermand the orders of Buchanan Secretaries of War and of the Navy. But the admini tration did not hear of this until early in April. Seward expected such an outcome, that would expla both why he had dared to give Campbell the assuranc at different times since March 15th, and why he did n hasten to undeceive him and the commissioners aft March 28th. But if Seward, without informing th President, knew what would happen, he was party to

t. If there was such a plot, it was operated through ɔtt; and that would be ample reason for Scott and vard to favor withdrawing the troops, and thereby sing the whole Pickens question as speedily as pos- le.

The Cabinet met again at noon, March 29th, and the esident called once more for written opinions as to at should be done.[1] Chase, Blair, and Welles agreed t Fort Sumter should be relieved. Bates was non- mmittal; and Smith alone still stood with Seward for evacuation. As to Fort Pickens, Welles and Bates re very urgent for reinforcement. Chase and Blair re so peremptory about relieving Sumter that they dently considered it superfluous to be explicit about kens. Smith's advice plainly rested upon the pre- mption that the evacuation of Sumter would be com- sated for by rigorous measures elsewhere. The logic Seward's former attitude meant that Pickens should be held at the cost of peace. It was well known t the Confederates had several days before begun to ly in Pensacola harbor the choking-off policy that been so successful in the neighborhood of Charles- .[2] The reception some members of the Cabinet gave tt's recommendation of the previous day was suf- ent to warn any one that it would be suicidal to ne out positively in favor of it now. With these ughts in mind it is interesting to notice the exact rding of Seward's response of March 29th:

First. The despatch of an expedition to supply or re- rce Sumter would provoke an attack, and so involve a at that point.

The fact of preparation for such an expedition would itably transpire, and would therefore precipitate the —and probably defeat the object. I do not think it

[1] Nicolay and Hay, 429 ff. Cameron seems to have been absent.
[2] Moore's *Rebellion Record*, Doc., p. 42; 3 Nicolay and Hay, 431.

wise to provoke a civil war beginning at Charleston and
rescue of an untenable position.

"Therefore, I advise against the expedition in eve
view.

"*Second.* I would call in Captain M. C. Meigs fort
with. Aided by his counsel, I would at once, and at eve
cost, prepare for a war at Pensacola and Texas, *to be take
however, only as a consequence of maintaining the poss
sions and authority of the United States.*[1]

"*Third.* I would instruct Major Anderson to retire fr
Sumter forthwith."[2]

Because war would as certainly be brought on
the reinforcement of Pickens as by the resupplyi
of Sumter, it seems just to infer that Seward did n
at this time intend to do either, but merely to contin
to hold Pickens and to be ready for war "as a co
sequence of maintaining the possessions and authori
of the United States." However, he must have realiz
that his original plans were almost sure to be reject
for those of the opposite faction in the Cabinet, and th
the only way to maintain his supremacy was by mea
of some new and vigorous move. Undoubtedly he st
hoped to continue through negotiation his policy of pea
and procrastination, but he saw the importance of bei
ready to take the lead in any case. That afternoon
took Captain Meigs to the White House and urg
Lincoln to put him in command of the three great Fl
ida fortresses on the Gulf—Pickens, Taylor, and Jeff
son.[3] About the same time the President ordered t
preparation of an expedition that should be ready
leave for Sumter by April 6th, but the use of wh
should depend upon circumstances.[4]

On Saturday, March 30th, Campbell had another
terview with Seward and left with him a telegram fr
Governor Pickens inquiring the cause of the delay

[1] Italics not in original.
[2] 3 Nicolay and Hay, 43
[3] 3 Nicolay and Hay, 434–36.
[4] 3 Nicolay and Hay, 43

acuating Sumter. Lamon had led the Governor to pect that it would take place before that date.[1] This olved Lincoln, and Seward said that he could not e a definite reply until Monday, April 1st. Seward ve Campbell no ground to suspect that there had been change of plans; for Crawford wrote to Toombs: he result of that interview was to satisfy him [Campl] entirely upon the good faith of the government in erything except the time as to when Sumter was to ve been evacuated, and the truth in reference to t is the promise was made *after* the Cabinet and esident had agreed to the order for evacuation, and persons thus pledging its fulfilment had no reason suspect that any influences whatever would delay prompt execution."[2] By telegraph they expressed ir confidence that "no attempt to reinforce Pickens been or will be made without notice."[3] Somebody l persuaded the commissioners that the *Tribune* re-t about the order to reinforce Fort Pickens was de-ned to help the Republicans in some local elections.[4]

On Sunday, the 31st, Seward requested Meigs and lonel Keyes, Scott's military secretary, to go to Scott l prepare a project for the relief of Fort Pickens, and ng it to the President before four o'clock. They de their report without having had time to see Scott, l Lincoln, through Seward, gave positive orders for ott to carry it out.[5] The next day, April 1st, on Sew-'s recommendation, Lincoln directed Lieutenant David Porter to "proceed to New York, and, with the least sible delay, assume command of any naval steamer ilable. Proceed to Pensacola Harbor, and at any t or risk prevent any expedition from the main-land ching Fort Pickens or Santa Rosa."[6] A telegram

Crawford, 337, 373, 374.
March 30th.
3 Nicolay and Hay, 436.
[2] Despatch of April 1st.
[4] Roman's despatch, March 29th.
[6] 4 *Naval Records*, 108.

from the President instructed the commandant of t
New York navy-yard to "fit out the *Powhatan* to go
sea at the earliest possible moment under sealed orders
and another order of the same date directed him "und
no circumstances communicate to the Navy Departme
the fact that she is fitting out."[1] Seward not only h
the management of the whole movement, but Wel
and Cameron were to know no more about it than
they were Confederates. Seward had given Lincol
oral order to Scott; he had recommended Porter's a
pointment and instructions.[2] Keyes, Meigs, and Port
made the preparations under his advice and that
Scott; and Scott prepared and gave to him, for t
President's signature, the order for the departure of t
expedition.[3] When the movement seemed to be
dangered from lack of available money, Seward we
to his department and took from the secret-service fu
ten thousand dollars in gold, which was put at Meig
disposal.[4] Nothing then known to others accounts
such acts as these.[5]

When Campbell called on the Secretary of Sta
April 1st, he was informed that the President was mu
disturbed by Governor Pickens's telegram and Lamo
pledge, for Lamon had had no commission or authorit
Campbell asked what he should tell the commissione
about Sumter. Seward took up his pen and wrote th

[1] 4 *Naval Records of the Rebellion*, 109.

[2] 2 Lincoln's *Works*, 28. [3] 3 Nicolay and Hay, 43

[4] Crawford, 411.

[5] Lincoln signed the orders without having time to consider th
meaning, and subsequently repudiated whatever interfered with
Fort Sumter expedition. The only defence that has ever been m
of Seward's concealment from Welles and Cameron was that there w
disloyal clerks in the War and the Navy Departments. The expla
tion does not explain why the Secretaries of these departments, as
as Seward, might not have kept the secret and avoided using any
under suspicion. The real reason will soon appear.

[6] Crawford, 337.

President might desire to supply Fort Sumter, but
ıld not undertake to do so without first giving notice
Governor Pickens. Campbell was greatly surprised
the statement, for he had supposed that evacuation
; only a matter of time. Now he feared lest the
gestion that the fort might be provisioned should
icate a change of plan and cause the South Caro-
ıns to attack it. Seward expressed his belief that
fort would not be supplied. Campbell suggested
t it would not be well to give the commissioners
answer that did not represent the purpose of the
ernment. Seward then went to consult the Presi-
t. When he came back he wrote this sentence for
ıpbell to repeat to the commissioners as his own:
am satisfied the government will not undertake
supply Fort Sumter without giving notice to Gov-
or Pickens."[1] Seward's explanation of the opposi-
to the plan of withdrawing from Sumter con-
ed Campbell that there had been no change of
cy and that evacuation was merely delayed, or that
administration was waiting for Anderson to be
ved out.[2]

y this time Seward recognized that he was in dire
its.[3] For months he had firmly believed he was the
man that could save his country from countless dis-
rs. Now a course of action that was contrary to
previous plans, advice, and expectations was likely
egin. In fact, expeditions for the relief of the two
cal points were already preparing. If the Sumter

Crawford, 337, 338; McPherson, 111.

Campbell to Davis, April 3d; 3 Nicolay and Hay, 411; Com-
oners to Toombs, April 1st; Crawford, 338.

n a brief note to Mrs. Seward, in Auburn, he wrote, April 1st:
t I am full of occupation, and more of anxieties. . . . Dangers
breakers are before us I wish you were near enough to share
of my thoughts and feelings, and fears, and trials."—2 Seward,

expedition should be ordered forward—and the curr
was very strong in that direction—the world would
derstand that Seward's counsel had been rejected a
that he had lost his power. It would humiliate him
making it plain that either he himself had been decei
or that he had tried to deceive others, and perhaps bo
If the Fort Pickens expedition — which was Sewar
almost exclusively — should be despatched as design
and be successful, it would save a part of his presti
But if either expedition should be carried out, south
Unionism would swing into secession, and a civil wa
which he confidently believed would end in complete
union and the overthrow of his party—would soon br
out. Was there no way to avert these calamities?

Evidently as a last, desperate effort he laid this no
elaborate, and dashing programme before the Preside

Some Thoughts for the President's Consideration,
April 1, 1861.

First. We are at the end of a month's administrati
and yet without a policy either domestic or foreign.

Second. This, however, is not culpable, and it has e
been unavoidable. The presence of the Senate, with
need to meet applications for patronage, have preven
attention to other and more grave matters.

Third. But further delay to adopt and prosecute
policies for both domestic and foreign affairs would
only bring scandal on the administration, but danger u
the country.

Fourth. To do this we must dismiss the applicants
office. But how? I suggest that we make the local
pointments forthwith, leaving foreign or general ones
ulterior and occasional action.

Fifth. The policy at home. I am aware that my vi
are singular, and perhaps not sufficiently explained.
system is built upon this idea as a ruling one, namely, t
we must

CHANGE THE QUESTION BEFORE THE PUBLIC FROM
UPON SLAVERY, OR ABOUT SLAVERY, for a question u
UNION OR DISUNION:

n other words, from what would be regarded as a party
estion to one of patriotism or union.
The occupation or evacuation of Fort Sumter, although
in fact a slavery or a party question, is so regarded.
tness the temper manifested by the Republicans in the
e states, and even by the Union men in the South.
would therefore terminate it as a safe means for chang-
the issue. I deem it fortunate that the last adminis-
tion created the necessity.
For the rest, I would simultaneously defend and rein-
ce all the forts in the Gulf, and have the navy recalled
m foreign stations to be prepared for a blockade. Put
island of Key West under martial law.
This will raise distinctly the question of union or dis-
on. I would maintain every fort and possession in the
ith.

FOR FOREIGN NATIONS

would demand explanations from Spain and France,
egorically, at once.
would seek explanations from Great Britain and Rus-
and send agents into Canada, Mexico, and Central
erica to rouse a vigorous continental spirit of indepen-
ce on this continent against European intervention.
nd, if satisfactory explanations are not received from
in and France,
Would convene Congress and declare war against them.
But whatever policy we adopt, there must be an ener-
c prosecution of it.
For this purpose it must be somebody's business to pur-
and direct it incessantly.
Either the President must do it himself, and be all the
le active in it, or
evolve it on some member of his Cabinet. Once adopt-
debates on it must end, and all agree and abide.
is not in my especial province;
ut I neither seek to evade nor assume responsibility.[1]

Even if Seward had not supplemented these proposi-
s by having certain naval officers transferred so that
y came into his plans,[2] we should have no doubts as
who expected to take command. Lincoln had as yet

[1] 2 Lincoln's *Works*, 29.
[2] 3 Nicolay and Hay, 439–41; Welles, 69, 70.

given few, if any, public indications of possessing grea
abilities than such men as Bates, Smith, and Well
His policy—or, rather, his lack of one—during Ma
cannot be defended successfully; it can only be
plained and excused. He had halted between two op
ions and had acted on none.

It was Seward's foreign policy that was most st
tling. It resembled a reckless invention of a mi
driven to desperate extremes, as the sole means of esca
from ruin, rather than a serious outline for national a
international action. Two or three days before
"Thoughts" were written, the newspapers reported th
a revolution had overthrown the Dominican repub
and had raised the flag and proclaimed the sovereign
of Spain. For some time, too, it was well known th
France, Spain, and Great Britain were considering
question of intervening in Mexico in order to redr
and stop the wrongs that their subjects had suffe
from the anarchy and violence there. It was a
rumored that a plan was developing to put a Europe
prince upon a Mexican throne. Citizens of the Unit
States had been subjected to so many outrages in Mex
that Buchanan had recommended to Congress that f
cible intervention should be resorted to, but our dom
tic affairs had engrossed the attention of the statesm
at the Capitol. The three European powers had
yet reached any agreement; and it was wholly unw
rantable for the United States to assume that they
tended to do more than enforce their just claims.
to Russia, the basis for demanding an explanation
to be found in the false reports in southern newspap
and in political circles in Washington that she was ab
to open diplomatic relations with the Confederacy.[1]

[1] The following letter from the Assistant Secretary of State
that time is especially interesting because the diplomatic archi

How did it happen that such a gorgeous and danger-
us scheme found lodgment even in a mind as imagina-
ve and bold as Seward's? He had early observed how
lvantageously public men can appeal to popular pas-
ons in dealing with foreign relations, and on a few
casions he had shown that he could outstrip all rivals
hen he really cared to do so. Yet even when advo-
ting a policy that pointed straight toward war, he
d generally taken pains to show that he deprecated

rnish no clew to an understanding of Seward's proposition in re-
ect to Russia :

"MONTROSE, N. Y., *June* 2, 1894.

"MY DEAR SIR :—Your letter of the 28th is received.

"Russia, at the outbreak of the War of 1812, offered her friendly
diation to prevent hostilities between the United States and Great
tain. Animated by the same spirit, she sought, early in 1861, to
ert the threatened hostilities between the South and the Union.
e Russian Minister at Washington, Mr. Stoeckl, had an intimate,
rsonal acquaintance with Slidell, Benjamin, and other southern
nators, and he went to the very verge of diplomatic prudence in his
orts to bring them into a good understanding with the Lincoln ad-
inistration. Of course these efforts were made with a view of keep-
them in the Union. Equally of course, perhaps, the secessionists
se, in their published correspondence, and in the press, to claim
t these were intimations on the part of Russia of a design to mani-
' sympathy with the South' and to 'recognize' and 'open diplo-
tic relations with the Confederacy.' You will find plenty of ref-
nces to this in the *Confederate Records*, and in the newspapers of
t day. The 'explanation' sought from Russia by the Secretary of
te was not of anything she had done, but of the purposes so osten-
ously imputed to her. Prince Gortschakoff, as soon as he realized
situation, and even before being called upon, gave the unequivocal
urance of Russia's sympathy with the Union, which you will find
he Diplomatic Correspondence of 1861. The intercourse between
Russian Minister and the southern Senators came to an abrupt ter-
nation when the first gun was fired at Sumter.

'In regard to France and Spain and Great Britain, you have al-
dy studied out the *causas rerum*.

"Very truly yours,

(Signed) "FREDERICK W. SEWARD.

R. FREDERIC BANCROFT,

"Washington."

actual hostilities. In speaking on the Hungarian que tion, in 1852, he said he would "never counsel it [wa except on the ground of necessary defence."[1] As h been noticed, he reproached Soulé, in 1853, for excitin the American people against some of the Europea powers. "I cannot sympathize with such a spirit he declared. "A war between the two continen would be a war involving not merely a trial [as t which was the strongest, but [it would involve] the i tegrity of our republic."[2] As late as January 12, 186 he plaintively asked in the Senate: "Have foreign n tions combined, and are they coming in rage upon u No. So far from being enemies, there is not a natio on the earth that is not an interested, admiring friend." He now ignored all these solemn opinions of the pas He was zealous to do what would be most certain make enemies of great nations and justify their co bining and "coming in rage upon us." He would l neither expedition depart until he had stirred up a fo eign war as the main-spring of his policy, for it w the prerequisite of changing the issue.[4] Why, in o

[1] 1 *Works*, 202.

[2] 3 *Works*, 616. Again, in 1856, when it looked as if we were have a conflict with England, he was careful not to glorify war: "A though I believe war sometimes justifiable, I regard it always, nev theless, as a calamity and an evil. I do not agree with either th who suppose it contributes to national prosperity or those who rega it as a salutary discipline of states."—*Globe*, 1855–56, Apdx., 79.

[3] 4 *Works*, 662.

[4] This must have been the case unless he had lost his reason. only the Fort Pickens expedition had gone forward, even that wou soon, if not immediately, have precipitated a civil war. There w no possibility for Seward to receive answers to the demands on t different powers and get Congress together before June. Moreov he had expressly said that he would "simultaneously defend a reinforce all the forts in the Gulf, and have the Navy recalled fr the foreign stations to be prepared for a blockade." Two mont at least, would have been required for this. He certainly did not pect that mere talk of a foreign war would "change the issue"; n

tical condition, it would not have sufficed to pick a arrel with one foreign nation at a time does not ap- ar, unless it was that he was so bent on speedily ving a conflict of that kind that he sought it in veral quarters so as to avoid delay and disappoint- ent.

Seward's theory of the unifying effect of a foreign ar had long been revolved in his mind. At the din- r of the New England Society he had declared that New York should be attacked by any foreign power ll the hills of South Carolina would pour forth their pulation to the rescue."[1] During the war of 1812 fferson had maintained, Seward said in the speech of nuary 12th, "that states must be kept within their nstitutional sphere by impulsion, if they could not be d there by attraction. Secession was then held to inadmissible in the face of a public enemy."[2] The ws about Santo Domingo came just at the time when ward was in the most distressing circumstances. So resolved to test his theory.

A third person, viewing the problem as it seemed to laid before the President by the "Thoughts," would ve expected that Seward's exit from the Cabinet uld soon follow. But when, just before the inaugu- ion, Lincoln insisted that Seward should share his ponsibilities and help keep the Republican factions gether for the welfare of the nation, it meant that rsonal eccentricities, however great, were not to have ch weight. So with the most perfect self-posses- n the President replied that he had pursued "the

ld he have imagined that after a civil war had begun a foreign war ddition would have been a panacea. Therefore, it is believed that projects spoken of in the "Thoughts" were to take precedence to ther plans. Otherwise, how could "all agree and abide"? The ion of March 15th supports this view. See *ante*, p. 100, last sen- ce.

[1] 4 *Works*, 649. [2] 4 *Works*, 653.

exact domestic policy you now urge, with the single e
ception that it does not propose to abandon Fort Sun
ter," and added:

"Again, I do not perceive how the reinforcement
Fort Sumter would be done on a slavery or a party issu
while that of Fort Pickens would be done on a mo
national and patriotic one.

"The news received yesterday in regard to St. Doming
certainly brings a new item within the range of our foreig
policy; but up to that time we have been preparing circu
lars and instructions to ministers and the like, all in pe
fect harmony, without even a suggestion that we had
foreign policy."

As to Seward's suggestion about adopting an energet
policy and having some one for an absolute leader, h
said:

"I remark that if this must be done, I must do i
When a general line of policy is adopted, I apprehen
there is no danger of its being changed without goo
reason, or continuing to be a subject of unnecessary d
bate; still, upon points arising in its progress I wish, an
I suppose I am entitled to have, the advice of all the Cab
net."[1]

Of course Seward's "Thoughts" in no way interrupte
the preparation of the two expeditions to go South. Th
Powhatan and other ships were made ready during th
first days of April. By the 4th Lincoln had decided
attempt the relief of Fort Sumter. On the 5th Secr
tary Welles, with the approval of the President, a
pointed Captain Mercer naval commander of the Sumt

[1] It was natural for the President not to be altogether satisfied wi
what Scott had done, or to feel quite certain as to what he might
So, also on April 1st, he sent him these lines: "Would it impose t
much labor on General Scott to make short, comprehensive daily
ports to me of what occurs in his department, including moveme
by himself, and under his orders, and the receipt of intelligence?
not, I will thank him to do so."—2 Lincoln's *Works*, 30.

et, and instructed him to take the *Powhatan* as the g-ship—the *Powhatan* already assigned to Porter, e naval commander of the Pickens expedition. After ercer had taken possession of her, on the 6th, Porter peared, showed his orders signed by the President, d demanded control because the President's command ok precedence. Before Mercer recognized the superi- ity of the President's instructions to those of the cretary of the Navy, the confusion was reported to ward, who took the telegram to Welles. Then both nt to the White House, each hoping to win the Presi- nt's approval. Regarding the Sumter expedition as e more urgent, and the *Powhatan* as of vital impor- nce to it, Lincoln quickly gave his support to Welles. ward objected and made excuses, but Lincoln was per- ptory. Then the Secretary of State telegraphed these rds to Porter: "Give up the *Powhatan* to Mercer.— ward." By this time Porter had superseded Mercer d was on the way to Fort Pickens, but he was soon ertaken. Having successfully maintained a few hours fore that an order signed by the President outranked e by the Secretary of the Navy, he was in no mood admit that the presidential order could be swept ay by a few words telegraphed in the name of Sew- d; therefore, he held his course, and other parts of s expedition soon followed.[1]

It was a striking exhibition of Seward's mental state the time that he should fail to send the command the President's name, when within a few hours the ministration had been sorely distressed by two mis- es of just this kind—one of which Seward was then ing to correct. The other related to Scott's order of rch 12th to reinforce Fort Pickens. That very after-

[1] For particulars about many of the facts stated in this paragraph, 4 Nicolay and Hay, chap. i.

noon of April 6th a special messenger from Pensacol harbor had reported that the United States officer in com mand there had declined to land troops at Fort Picken because, as has been mentioned, instructions from Scot could not be recognized as overruling those of Buchana issued by his Secretaries of War and of the Navy.

During the first days of April Seward's commun cations with the Confederate commissioners came to climax. After April 1st the reports that hostile mov ments were preparing grew more positive from day t day. On the 4th the commissioners credited the rumo that the United States intended to resist the acquisitio of Santo Domingo by Spain. The next day they su pected that this might be a ruse. By the evening o the 6th they thought the armaments were to be use against Fort Pickens, and perhaps against Sumter Early the following (Sunday) morning Campbell wa again called in. He then sent a note to Seward, sta ing that various reports had caused the commissioner "anxiety and concern for two or three days"; that h had repeated to them the assurances that the admini tration would give notice to Governor Pickens befor attempting to supply Sumter, and that he (Campbel "should have notice whenever any measure changin the existing status prejudicially to the Confederat States is contemplated as respects Fort Pickens." H concluded with these sentences: "I do not experienc the same anxiety or concern as they express. But I have said more than I am authorized, I pray that yo will advise me."[2] To this inquiry Seward answere without date or signature: "Faith as to Sumter full kept; wait and see; other suggestions received, and wi be respectfully considered."[3] Campbell understood th

[1] Telegrams to Toombs of the dates mentioned.

[2] This is quoted from the copy preserved by the commissioners.

[3] Crawford's *Genesis, etc.*, 340. The copy that the commissione

mean that Governor Pickens should have notice be-
re an attempt should be made to supply Sumter, but
at the assurances as to Fort Pickens were no longer
be depended on.[1]

Sufficient had been learned to convince the commis-
oners that a "hostile movement" was on foot and
at an expedition had sailed against the Confederate
ates. "It may be Sumter and the Mississippi. It is
most certain that it is Pickens and the Texas frontier."[2]
hat evening the commissioners' secretary informed the
ssistant Secretary of State—the Secretary not being at
me—that an answer to the commissioners' note of
arch 12th would be called for the following afternoon.[3]
Seward's formal reply, which was dated March 15th,
as found to be a clear and positive denial of all the re-
ests and presumptions of the Confederate commission-
s. In the events that had occurred in the seven
ates he saw

not a rightful and accomplished revolution and an inde-
ndent nation, with an established government, but rather

k of Campbell's letter, to which this was a reply, contains nothing call forth the last eight words. It seems likely that after the commission's copy of Campbell's note was made, he added his offer to go Montgomery, to which Crawford refers (*ibid.*), and to which Seward's eight words were probably an answer.

[1] This is shown by his written statement to the commissioners, ich is reflected in the following letter to Seward:

"WASHINGTON CITY, *April* 7, 1861.

'DEAR SIR:—I have said to the commissioners to-day I believe t the government will not undertake to supply Sumter without ice to Governor Pickens.

'I have said further that, heretofore, I have felt justified in say- 'That whenever any measure changing the existing status as re- cts Fort Pickens prejudicially to the Confederate States is con- nplated I should have notice,' but that I do not feel at liberty to say s now.

"Very respectfully, "J. A. CAMPBELL."

[2] Telegram of April 7th. —Seward MSS.

[3] Memorandum of the secretary in the records of the commission.

a perversion of a temporary and partisan excitement to th inconsiderate purpose of an unjustifiable and unconstitu tional aggression upon the rights and the authorit vested in the Federal government, and hitherto benignl exercised, . . . for the maintenance of the Union, th preservation of liberty, and the security, peace, welfare happiness, and aggrandizement of the American people."

For a cure of the evils, he said, he looked patientl and confidently "to regular and considerate action of th people of those states, in co-operation with their brethre in the other states, through the Congress of the Unite States, and such extraordinary conventions, if there sha be need thereof, as the Federal Constitution contemplate and authorizes to be assembled."[1]

In a long rejoinder the commissioners reproache Lincoln's administration for being "persistently wedde to those fatal theories of construction of the Federa Constitution always denied by the statesmen of th South," and they tried to make it appear that the Unite States were responsible for the impending war becaus no negotiations would be entered into with the repre sentatives of the Confederacy. They had no fear of th results; their people could never be subdued "while freeman survives in the Confederate States to wield weapon." They advised Seward to dismiss as delusion his hopes of bringing the Confederate States into sub mission. Evidently angered by what he had said abou a "perversion of a temporary and partisan excitement, they sarcastically replied: "If you cherish these dream you will be awakened from them and find them as un real and unsubstantial as others in which you have re cently indulged."[2] On the 10th they reported their mi sion to be closed.

The ships of the Sumter expedition left New York o the 8th, 9th, and 10th.[3] In compliance with the promise Governor Pickens was officially informed on the firs

[1] McPherson's *Rebellion*, 109.

[2] McPherson, 109, 110.

[3] Crawford, 416.

e that an attempt would be made to put provisions
o Fort Sumter; but that, unless this should be resisted
the fort attacked, no troops or military supplies would
thrown in without further notice.[1] The sending of
plies to United States troops in a state that had
eded was regarded in the South as evidence of an in-
tion to coerce the states. The Confederate leaders
ly realized the undesirability of a conflict, but every
gestion of force had to be resisted in order to keep
popular confidence and to win the actual support of
arge majority of the people of the slave states that
re still nominally loyal. They chose war and its
essary accompaniments of blood and destruction in
er to preclude the possibility of a reaction in favor of
on. The different batteries around the harbor opened
onverging fire on Fort Sumter early on the morning
April 12th. Throughout that day, and until the after-
on of the next, Anderson and his men doggedly kept
the contest against vastly superior forces. Then,
ing no likelihood either of relief or of being able to
d out much longer, they agreed to capitulate.

But for two unforeseen occurrences the result might
e been different. A part of the fleet reached the
dezvous off Charleston harbor on the day the attack
an, and in time to succor the fort if the other ships
arrived as was planned. A storm had scattered the
s which were necessary to perform some of the work
de the harbor; and the ships that were ready for
on waited for the *Powhatan* — the *Powhatan* in
ch Porter was hastening to Fort Pickens—for she
counted upon as the head of the Sumter fleet and
been specially equipped for the most difficult part
he work to be done in Charleston harbor. Before
could organize a forward movement out of the

[1] 2 Lincoln's *Works*, 32.

meagre resources at command, the firing of the gu ceased.

At Fort Pickens the conditions were favorable. second order to land the troops already in the harb had been issued and obeyed before the Seward-Port expedition arrived. The coming of the ships with su plies and reinforcements made it possible to put t fort on a safe footing; and thenceforth, throughout t war, the stars and stripes defied the neighboring Co federate batteries.

Seward's acts in connection with these expeditio have been the cause of two serious charges: First, th he wilfully tried to prevent the relief of Fort Sumte and, second, that he acted dishonorably toward Justi Campbell and the Confederate commissioners.

1. Welles and Blair were the chief accusers on t first charge.[1] Their suspicions began with the assum tion that the *Powhatan* was *taken out* of the Sumt fleet. The President and the Secretary of the Na each on April 1st sent instructions for the *Powhat* to be fitted out as soon as possible. Lincoln's origin intention was to have her go with the Pickens expe tion, and he issued instructions to this effect, as alrea mentioned. Welles expected to use the *Powhatan* as t flag-ship of the Sumter fleet, but did not give his orde until four days later.[2] It was natural that each shou desire the *Powhatan*. After what has been learned Seward's methods, it would hardly be warrantable express confidence that his despatch to Porter was r the result of subtle calculation. But the probabili that he was half-distracted by the occurrences of th day, and the well-known fact that he was the real ch of the expedition—these seem sufficient to explain failure to telegraph the command in the President's na

[1] Welles, 61–67.

[2] 3 Nicolay and Hay, 43

is not so easy to deal with what is known as the
vey incident. When the government seized the
es of the despatches in the Washington telegraph
es it was found that, on April 6th, James E. Har-
had telegraphed to Charleston: "Positively deter-
d not to withdraw Anderson. Supplies go im-
iately, supported by a naval force under Stringham
eir landing be resisted.—A Friend."[1] Harvey was
outh Carolinian by birth, and had lately been a
hington correspondent for several northern news-
rs. A little later he became Minister to Portugal.
n the discovery of his despatch, the New York *Tri-*
, the *Times*, and many other newspapers demanded
mmediate recall, for his act was akin to treason.[2]
nate committee also made a like demand, but with-
effect. Why? Seward stood in the way. Not
had he given Harvey the information, but he knew
e telegram the day it was sent. Nevertheless, he
ed him to depart on his mission; and later, when
body was boiling with indignation, Seward ex-
ed that at first he himself was indignant and ad-
the President to revoke Harvey's commission.
thinking it over coolly," said Seward, "I thought
ong to punish a man for his stupid folly, when
he had committed no crime!"[3] This attitude of
indifference must be judged in connection with
facts already noticed: First, that at the time Sew-
onfided in a native Southerner the profound secrets
e Sumter expedition, he was himself conducting
Pickens enterprise with a degree of secrecy that did
permit knowledge of it to reach the Secretaries
whose departments the troops, vessels, and supplies
ordered; and, second, that he had predicted that

[1] 1 *War Records*, 287.
[2] *Tribune*, June 8, 10, 20, 1861; *Times*, June 7, 1861.
[3] 4 Nicolay and Hay, 31, 32.

the fact of preparations for the relief of Sumter "wo inevitably transpire."[1] The plain inference was t there would not be a similar danger in regard to preparing for Fort Pickens. *A priori* it seemed others that the likelihood of exposure would be con erably greater, for Fort Pickens was twice as far fr New York.

Nevertheless, probably Blair and Welles have char too much. If Seward had really meant to prevent success of the Sumter expedition, it would only h been necessary for him to inform the commissior indirectly. Then the fort would have been attac and taken before the ships could leave New Yo Harvey's telegram was discredited, and the Confeder continued to have suspicions merely, until Linco messenger arrived. Seward was so eager to have Pickens expedition succeed that he may have thou it would do no harm to let all suspicions be direc toward Fort Sumter. But his well-known pledges t Sumter would be abandoned, his personal humiliat at being overruled, and his consequent inclination to it be known in advance that he had no responsibi for or pride in that enterprise—these would seem be sufficient to explain his amazing carelessness ab one expedition, while the secrecy of another was so fectly guarded.

2. As an exhibition of character and politics, the of the Confederate commissioners and Seward's c munications with them are both to be regretted. Confederate authorities felt deeply chagrined that t envoys to Washington had obtained neither di recognition nor an official pledge to continue the fenceless peace. Instead of either, a war had begun the Confederacy had taken the initiative. They

[1] Seward's opinions of March 15th and 29th.

sed their chief reliance on Seward's hopes and pledges on his all but fatal illusions. When he was overruled, eir plans became worthless; so they tried to make a ape-goat of him.[1] The pith of the charge was that ward studiously deceived them by entering into and en violating a promise, a pledge, a contract even, by ich the commissioners, in consideration of the assurce that Fort Sumter was to be evacuated, agreed nporarily to forbear to ask an answer to their note. must be admitted that Seward was unwarrantably sitive about Sumter. His misconception of the weight the influences on his side deceived himself and correspondingly deceived the Confederates. Probably Linn did not know all about the communications reding Fort Sumter until April 1st, when he promised at it should not be supplied without notice to Govnor Pickens. Although Seward still expected evacuon, and so indicated to Campbell, all concerned underod that Lincoln's pledge took the place of Seward's lier declaration. This pledge was faithfully kept, d the Confederates were allowed a generous margin time between the actual notice and the arrival of any the ships. How, then, do the accusers make their

[1] In a long letter of April 13, 1861, Campbell told Seward that the missioners "conclude they have been abused and overreached," he expressed his belief that any candid man would agree that e equivocating conduct of the administration" was "the proxie cause of the great calamity" of the outbreak of hostilities.—Pherson's *Rebellion*, 111. In a message to the Confederate Congress, il 29th, Jefferson Davis said: "The crooked path of diplomacy can rcely furnish an example so wanting in courtesy, in candor, and ctness as was the course of the United States government toward commissioners in Washington."—1 Davis's *Confederate Governt*, 280. Almost a decade later, Alexander H. Stephens recorded s his opinion for posterity that the commissioners "were met with equivocation, a duplicity, a craft, and deceit which, taken altoher, is without a parallel in modern times!"—2 *War Between the tes*, 346.

point? By juggling with the facts. They misrepr sented that Seward's sentence, "Faith as to Sumter full kept," referred to his original assurance that Sumt was to be evacuated, instead of to Lincoln's promise t give notice to Governor Pickens. The Confederat leaders in Washington, in Montgomery, and in Charle ton correctly understood what that sentence meant, a their correspondence shows.[1]

Fortunately for Seward, at that time, they mad their charges of deception in connection with Fo Sumter instead of Fort Pickens. The reason was tha the whole course of events was changed by the actio in Charleston harbor, while that in Pensacola harbor a tracted comparatively little attention. It is certain tha Seward knew he was deceiving the Confederates betwee March 28th and April 7th.[2] Unless he had not hear of Scott's order of March 12th (which is altogether in probable), or unless he was sure that it would be disr garded contrary to Lincoln's expectations, the deceptio began on March 15th and continued until April 7th, whe his failure to reply to Campbell's reference to Fort Picke in the letter of that date led the Confederates to infe that that fort was to be reinforced.

Each side endeavored to overreach and outwit th other. From the previous midwinter until the secon

[1] On April 7th, Governor Pickens telegraphed to the commissione to get accurate information. Crawford replied the next day: "W were reassured yesterday that the status at Sumter would not changed without previous notice to Governor Pickens, but we ha no faith in them. The war policy prevails in the Cabinet at th hour." On the 9th Crawford telegraphed to Beauregard, at Charl ton, "The messenger [from Lincoln] doubtless speaks by authorit He gives the promised notice to Governor Pickens. Diplomacy h failed."—1 *War Records*, 297. See also *ibid.*, 283, 284, 286, 287, 2 There are other evidences in the MS. archives of the commission.

[2] See *ante*, pp. 126, 140, 141.

ek in April, Seward was determined to prevent the tbreak of the civil war. So in secret interviews, onymous notes, and indirect intercourse he gave as- rances that could surely be fulfilled only in case he tead of Lincoln should control affairs. This he was nfident would be the case. He probably thought, too, at there was no need of great scrupulousness in deal- with men who were trying to destroy the Union.

The numerous complications in which he so strangely volved himself were the outgrowth of two supreme sions. The first was that the Southerners had stronger s to the Federal government than to slavery, and at, if given time to reflect, they would not go to war the interest of that institution. The second was that alone could furnish and direct the policy—whether peace, procrastination, and compromise, or of war, il or intercontinental, or both—by which the coun- was to be saved. His ambition was for the Union stly more than for himself. He sought power and stery of the administration and of all difficulties, not cause he wanted the glory of a semi-dictatorship, but cause he honestly believed that that was the way for n to serve and to save the nation.

CHAPTER XXX

THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE. — SHAPING FOREIGN RELATIONS, 1861

The Secretary of State is regarded as the highest political officer appointed by the President. Seward was fortunate in having had much experience in discussing questions in foreign relations, for since 1857 he had been a member of the Senate committee on foreign affairs. He had a reputation for hospitality, affability, discretion, and adaptability. On the other hand, the exigencies of party leadership and his fondness for showy declarations and surprising prophecies had occasionally led him into saying some unpleasant things about European monarchies. In a public letter in 1849 he announced: "The monarchs of Europe are to have no rest while they have a colony remaining on this continent."[1] When advocating a welcome to Kossuth, he maintained: "This republic is, and forever must be, a living offence to Russia and to Austria and to despotic powers everywhere. You will never, by whatever humiliations, gain one friend or secure one ally in Europe or America that wears a crown."[2] At the same time he referred to Napoleon III. as "the youthful and impatient Bonaparte, the sickly successor of the Romans." In 1852 he mentioned the "treachery by which Louis Napoleon rose to a throne on the ruins of the republic,"[3] and had pronounced the French Empire "a hateful usurpation."

[1] 3 *Works*, 409. [2] 1 *Works*, 184. [3] 4 *Works*, 562.
[4] *Globe*, 1855–56, Apdx., 79.

t Napoleon, if he had ever heard of Seward's expres-
ns, was able to overlook them and to treat the New
rk Senator with marked attention when he visited
ance in 1859. Seward had spoken of Great Britain in
h terms as to cause himself to be regarded as especial-
unfriendly. His remarks in the debates about the Irish
atriots" and the Clayton-Bulwer treaty were illustra-
ns.[1] When discussing the latter subject he character-
l Great Britain to be the foreign power that was "the
atest, the most grasping, and the most rapacious in the
rld." "Without a war on our part, Great Britain
l wisely withdraw and disappear from this hemisphere
hin a quarter of a century—at least within half a cen-
y."[2] The acquisition of Canada by the United States
l long been known to be one of his favorite ideas.[3]
rd John Russell, the British Secretary of State for
reign Affairs, recorded his suspicions as early as
bruary 20, 1861 — more than five weeks before the
ual proposition of April 1st was made—that an at-
ipt might be made to get up a quarrel with Great
tain in case other plans should fail to reunite the
ions.[4] But wise nations let the past lie buried, unless
ie new issue stirs up old grievances or animosities.

From 1820 to 1866 the Department of State at Wash-
ton was located in a dingy little structure, two stories

[1] See *ante*, Vol. I., pp. 323 ff., 484 ff.

[2] *Globe*, 1855–56, 290, and Apdx., 79.

[3] It was well known that he had spoken of this as a means of com-
ation to freedom for the acquisitions slavery had made on the
h. (3 *Works*, 273; 4 *Works*, 442.) In the debate about the fish-
in August, 1852, he said: "A war about these fisheries would
war which would result either in the independence of the British
inces, or in their annexation to the United States. I devoutly
that that consummation may come; the sooner the better; but
not desire it at the cost of war, or injustice. I am content to
for the ripened fruit which must fall."—1 *Works*, 273. For
r references about Canada, see *post*, p. 472.

[4] *Parliamentary Papers, North America*, No. 1, p. 13.

high, which stood on ground now covered by the nort ern end of the Treasury building. Its corridors ar rooms were small, and an English traveller wrote, ear in 1861, that one would see much more bustle in the pa sages leading to the council-room of a poor-law boa or a parish vestry.[1] Here the most important years Seward's life were to be spent. In 1866 the departme was removed to the building, now occupied as an orpha asylum, at the corner of 14th and S Streets N. W.[2]

The home personnel of the department number less than half as many as in 1899. For Assistant-Se retary, Seward chose his son Frederick. He was a la yer by profession, but during most of the decade sin his admission to the bar he had been associate-edit of the Albany *Evening Journal*. He had never held public office, but journalism and intimate associati with his father and Weed had made him familiar wi political affairs. Although he had not completed h thirty-first year, he soon demonstrated that he possess ability and good judgment. The chief clerk, Willia Hunter, was a man of uncommon energy, then only little past the middle-point of his nearly three-sco years of valuable service in this department. At pr ent there are a second-assistant secretary and a thi assistant secretary, and six distinct bureaus, each with chief; in Seward's time none of these offices existed.

Not less important than the departmental officials home were its leading representatives abroad. Bo custom and the public service demanded that Buchana appointees abroad should give place to Republicans.[3]

[1] Russell's *Diary*, 36.

[2] It remained there until 1875, when it was given its present f quarters next to the War and Navy Departments in the gigantic gr ite edifice south of Pennsylvania Avenue and east of 17th Street Gaillard Hunt, *The Department of State*, 202.

[3] Writing a few months later of the diplomatic service of Buch

Charles Francis Adams, Seward's close political and rsonal friend, succeeded George M. Dallas as Minister Great Britain. Although known as a man of marked ent and character, Adams was without experience in lomacy. It was, therefore, extremely odd in Amer- n politics that a third Adams, in direct line, should resent his country at the Court of St. James. William Dayton was appointed in place of Charles J. Faulkner United States representative at the Court of the ileries. His prominence in his party was regarded establishing a just claim to so conspicuous a place, er it was not found practicable to make him a mem- of the Cabinet. For similar reasons Cassius M. Clay s sent to Russia. Carl Schurz, then a young lawyer Wisconsin, but already famous for his eloquent and ective antislavery speeches, was given the mission to ain. Within a year he was transferred by request m the legation to the Federal army. George P. rsh became the first United States Minister to the v Kingdom of Italy. He had essayed both politics l diplomacy, but his chief work had been done in lology. After Austria had given notice that Anson rlingame would be *persona non grata*, John Lothrop tley was received at Vienna with special favor. His *tch Republic* had already given him a world-wide utation; and a long letter that he published in the

administration Seward, said: "Our representatives whom that inistration had placed in communication with foreign courts were nany cases equally demoralized, and in some, as we had reason to eve, absolutely disloyal. Agents of the insurrectionists were already erstood to be living in European capitals invoking recognition of etended new confederacy, on the ground that the revolution which ld precede it was already *de facto* accomplished. They inculcated doctrine that the government of the United States could not, and it would not, even though it should become necessary, maintain Union by the employment of force."—Seward to Dayton, July 6, . MS.

London *Times*, on the struggle in the United States, wa
the first, and perhaps the best, of the many impressiv
arguments addressed to Europe in behalf of the Feder
Union. But no appointment of the new administratio
was quite so significant as that of Thomas Corwi
Mexico, bankrupt and the prey of political wolve
knew what it meant for the United States to send
her the man who, in that immortal protest against indul
ing the passion for conquest, said that if he were a Me
ican he would welcome the invading Americans "wit
bloody hands to hospitable graves." John Bigelow, th
new consul at Paris, had for several years been asso
ated with William Cullen Bryant as one of the edito
of the New York *Evening Post*. His energy, judgmen
and knowledge of European affairs soon made hi
one of the most useful of Seward's coadjutors. Aft
Dayton's death he became the Minister; and from fir
to last his services during this period were unrivale
by those of any other representative abroad exce
Adams.

When Lincoln was elected, the government was
friendly terms with all nations. France and Gre
Britain were the powers whose good-will was of th
first importance to the United States. The relatio
with Great Britain had never been more agreeabl
Toward the end of 1860 the Prince of Wales made
tour of the United States. The enthusiastic welcom
he received brought out an exchange of hearty co
gratulations between the two countries, and many
each side rejoiced at the prospect of a long period
cordiality. Governor Morgan, of New York, gave
official reception and dinner in honor of the royal part
Seward was one of the guests and took special pride
the occasion, for he supposed that the Prince's visit w
the result of a suggestion that he made to the Briti

nister a year or two before.[1] Between Americans
Frenchmen there was a traditional friendship that
some sentimental importance, but only little practi-
force. The two peoples have so few traits and ten-
cies in common that they generally misjudge one
ther both as persons and as nations. The citizens of
United States could not forget that France was tol-
ting the usurpations of Napoleon III., and the French
re not pleased by the disapproval. However, no seri-
ill-will was felt on either side.

The diplomatic corps in Washington had closely
ched the course of events since November. The
ional capital was then a southern city in nearly
ry respect. Its aristocratic society was composed al-
st entirely of persons who were not only slave-holders,
were also either leaders of secession or sympathizers
h it. The representatives of foreign nations were
ught into intimate relations with this class, and some
hem received extremely pro-southern impressions.
y in turn influenced the opinions of the Secretaries
Foreign Affairs of their respective governments. It
in this way, as well as by the declarations of south-
sympathizers in Europe, that the political world
ad early came to take a favorable view of the power
prospects of the Confederacy.

great war concerns a large part of the civilized
ld, and the principals in such a conflict are greatly
cted by the attitude foreign nations assume tow-
them. These facts were early recognized by the
retaries of State at Washington and at Montgom-
respectively. Even Buchanan's paralytic adminis-
ion raised its shriveled arm to warn Europe against
rference. On February 28, 1861, Secretary Black

[1] 2 Seward, 471.

addressed a circular letter to our Ministers at the lea
ing foreign capitals, instructing them to use such mea
as they might consider proper and necessary to preve
the anticipated efforts of the Confederacy to obtain
recognition of independence. "This government h
not relinquished its constitutional jurisdiction with
the territory of those states, and it does not desire
to do so." It was evidently the right of this gover
ment, he said, to ask all foreign powers not to take a
steps likely to encourage the revolutionary movemer
An acknowledgment of the independence of the "Co
federated States" by any nation would tend to d
turb the friendly relations, diplomatic and commerci
now existing between that nation and the Unit
States.[1] Black's communication seemed perfunctory a
lifeless.

Nine days later Seward with vivacity and hope, "
iterated and amplified" Black's instructions, as he su
sequently wrote.[2] Our Ministers were informed th
they were expected to use "the greatest possible di
gence and fidelity. . . . to counteract and prevent t
designs of those who would invoke foreign interventi
to embarrass and overthrow the Republic." The Pre
dent entertained "full confidence in the speedy rest
ation of the harmony and unity of the government by
firm, yet just and liberal, bearing, co-operating with t
deliberate and loyal action of the American people
for the disturbances "had their origin only in popul
passions, excited under novel circumstances of very tra
sient character." The advantage that any nation mig
derive from a connection with the disaffected porti
of our country would be merely ephemeral, and wou
be counterbalanced by the evils that would flow fr
disunion. He regretted that the disturbances mig

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 31.

[2] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 3

se foreigners some inconvenience, but he announced
s the policy of the administration to indemnify all
sons suffering any injury.[1] These were not alto-
her accurate statements, but Seward believed they
e; and he had made an almost perfect expression of
se considerations that are of the first importance in
rnational relations. However, it was practically
ossible to shape a definite foreign policy until after
ould be known what the domestic one was to be.
as already been seen how this domestic policy, like
ft upon an inlet of the sea, drifted this way and that
h the tide of public opinion.

incoln's rejection of the programme Seward pro-
d on April 1st[2] rid it of its dangerous features. But
t became of the offences—then considered to be so
ous — of Spain, of France, of Great Britain, and of
sia?

s has been mentioned, a revolution under Spanish
uences had lately overthrown the Republic of Santo
mingo and proclaimed the supremacy of the mother-
ntry. On April 2, 1861, before he had received
ial information of this fact, Seward wrote to Tas-
, the Spanish Minister at Washington, saying that
reported attempt "cannot fail to be taken as a first
in a policy of armed intervention by the Spanish
ernment in the American countries which once con-
uted Spanish America." There was grave signif-
ce in the following sentence:

I am directed to inform you and the government of
Catholic Majesty, in a direct manner, that, if they [the
lutionary acts] shall be found to have received at any
the sanction of that government, the President will
bliged to regard them as manifesting an unfriendly
t towards the United States, and to meet the further

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 32, 33.

[2] See *ante*, p. 132.

prosecution of enterprises of that kind in regard to eith the Dominican Republic or any part of the American co tinent or islands, with a prompt, persistent, and, if possibl effective resistance."[1]

Two days later Minister Tassara made a discreet a soothing response, which did not especially change t aspect of the incident. Subsequently Spain replied evasively that Seward anticipated that she would " the end decide to recognize the revolution and to co firm the authority proclaimed in the island of San Domingo in her name." Thereupon he instructed o *chargé d'affaires* at Madrid to enter a protest against th assumption or exercise of authority—"a protest whic in every case, we shall expect to maintain."[2] Our ne Minister, Carl Schurz, soon asked if the administrati would have approved the action if his predecessor h broken off diplomatic relations with Spain on accou of what had taken place.[3] Seward directed Schurz confine his action to a protest.[4] On June 22d Sewa wrote again, saying that he did " not think it would expedient to divert its [Congress's] attention from t domestic subjects for which it is convened."[5] About week later the Spanish Minister read to him the roy decree pronouncing the annexation of Santo Domin to Spain; but the Secretary concluded that no furth action on the part of the United States would be nec sary.[6] When Schurz requested an explicit statement the ulterior policy of the government, he was inform by the Secretary that there had been so many importa questions demanding attention that time had not be found for the full consideration of this one; so the su

[1] MS. The references to the MS. diplomatic correspondence of t United States are, when not otherwise stated, to the MS. archives the Department of State. [2] Seward to Perry, May 21, 1861. MS [3] Schurz to Seward, June 5, 1861. MS. [4] June 10, 1861. MS [5] MS. [6] Seward to Schurz, July 2, 1861. MS

ect was left to Congress at its next regular session, beginning in December.[1] This was Seward's graceful way of escape from making good the direct threats of a few months before.

Spain pursued her own course in Santo Domingo. Instead of being a menace to the United States, although they were almost helpless, she could not consummate this little undertaking. For four years, and in vain, she poured out her money and sacrificed the lives of her soldiers in trying to get a permanent hold upon Santo Domingo; but in 1865 her rule was thrown off and the black republic revived.

France was the other power from which Seward had urged that explanations should be demanded "categorically, at once." Lincoln's rejection of the plan seems to have had a magical effect. The instructions to our Minister and the notes to the French legation show no trace of any except the most cordial relations between the two countries. Seward even had such confidence in Mercier, the French Minister at Washington, that within one day of the time when it was suggested that France must be called to account, he "confidentially" sent to Mercier a copy of the note just written to Tassara. The Secretary hoped to induce France to join us in the protest; for, he wrote, she has "an interest in the preservation of peace and order scarcely less than that which has induced this protest on the part of the United States."[2] But France ignored his communication.[3] Seward solicited the co-operation of Great Britain also in opposing the annexation of Santo Domingo, and he made not the slightest allusion to the offences on her part that were regarded as so serious on April 1st. The British government, however, reluctantly accepted what

[1] Seward to Schurz, August 14, 1861. MS. [2] MS.
[3] Seward to Schurz, June 22, 1861. MS.

Spain had done, after Spain had declared that slavery should not be established in the new territory.[1] As to Russia, the records of the department do not indicate that as much as a whisper of complaint was made against her. "That power," Seward wrote, May 6, 1861, to our new Minister, Cassius M. Clay, "was an early, and it has always been a constant, friend. This relationship between two nations so remote and so unlike has excited much surprise." Instead of inviting the disfavor of Russia by demanding an explanation of a not serious indiscretion on the part of her Minister, Seward instructed Clay to make it his business to inquire "whether the sluggish course of commerce between the two nations cannot be quickened and its volume increased."[2] So Russia continued to be our warmest friend.

Thus it is seen how very different these results are from those contemplated in the "Thoughts for the President's Consideration," and how little occasion there was for proposing a course of action that would have been futile unless it had made both hemispheres blaze with war,—and then it would have been the most wicked and dangerous thing conceivable.

The despatches written by Seward before the fall of Fort Sumter show a wholly erroneous conception of the impending struggle with the South. The instructions of April 10th to Charles Francis Adams said that the President was not

"disposed to reject a cardinal dogma of theirs [the secessionists], namely, that the Federal government could not reduce the seceding states to obedience by conquest, even although he were disposed to question that proposition. But, in fact, the President willingly accepts it as true. Only an imperial or despotic government could subjugate

[1] Seward to Schurz, June 21, 1861. MS.
[2] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 293.

roughly disaffected and insurrectionary members of the te."

ward believed that our system had "within itself, equate peaceful, conservative, and recuperative forces." ne have thought that, when he spoke of "reunion" rough constitutional amendments, he implied that ual disunion had been effected. He doubtless had mind merely the disruption of sectional fraternity and cessation of actual co-operation, for his next sentence lared that the President would "not suffer the Fed- l authority to fall into abeyance" nor aggravate ex- ng evils by attempts at coercion.[1]

Seward hoped to persuade European nations to accept theory that the *de facto* sovereignty of the United tes continued to exist within the Confederacy, al- ugh the Constitution and all signs of Federal authority xcept in the Post Office Department, which was car- l on at the expense of the loyal people—had been erseded by Confederate control, and although it was eatedly announced that there was to be no military rcion, no physical attempt to prevent the Confederacy m perfecting its organization at home in every di- tion. From the beginning he proclaimed with con- nce that the resources of the United States would adequate to every emergency, and that the panic had rly passed. There must be "no admissions of weak- s in our Constitution, nor of apprehension on the part he government." Suggestions of compromise must

[1] To the Minister to Prussia he wrote, March 22d: "The Union was ned upon popular consent, and must always practically stand on same basis. . . . While it is the intention of the President to ntain the sovereignty and rightful authority of the Union every- re with firmness as well as discretion, he at the same time relies great confidence on the salutary working of the agencies I have tioned [general and profound sentiments of loyalty] to restore harmony and union of the states." — *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 37.

not be listened to, and if Great Britain should decid to recognize the enemies of the republic, she should als prepare to enter into an alliance with them. Our o position to British interference was not to rest on th ground of any favor. No moral question [*i.e.*, slavery that might be supposed to lie at the basis of our d mestic conflict was to be brought into debate befo the British government; for it should not be forgotte that all the states "must always continue to be equ and honored members of this Federal Union, and tha their citizens throughout all political misunderstandin and alienations still are and always must be our kindre and countrymen." There had been much dissatisfactio in England on account of the recent Morrill tariff law Seward said that, in passing that law, the United State had a right to consider their own convenience. Th liberal commercial policy that the Confederacy migh be ready to offer would depend on peace for its e ecution. Great Britain's sagacity might be trusted t decide how likely peace would be in such circumstance and what would become of this policy when a tari was needed to furnish the sinews of war. "Recogn tion by her of the so-called Confederate States would l intervention and war in this country." Furthermor were the different parts of the British Empire held t gether by ties so strong that Great Britain could affo to set so dangerous a precedent as to encourage attemp at dismemberment? Above all, the citizens of the Unite States and of Great Britain were of common descen language, customs, sentiments, and religion. The gover ment and people of Great Britain might mistake the commercial interests, but they could not be indiffere to their ambition for civilization and humanity.

In the full text of this despatch there are a few se tences that warranted the conclusions of the correspo dent of the London *Times*—when Seward read it to hi

April 8th—that it contained an under-current of menace
d an implication that England might wish to inter-
re.[1] The United States were, in fact, very weak, so
as making physical resistance to foreign nations was
ncerned. The thing next best to possessing strength
s to display a confidence of possessing it; for this
uld be a warning that if any power should yield to the
nptation to intermeddle, its action would be prompt-
resented. It was absolutely necessary to insist that
national integrity was only slightly impaired, and
t the United States would demand and extend re-
ct, which is the prerequisite of true friendship be-
een governments. Otherwise there was no likelihood
preventing an early recognition of the Confederacy.
Lincoln's proclamation of April 15th, calling out sev-
y-five thousand militia, and summoning Congress into
ra session on July 4th, was the administration's re-
nse to the forced evacuation of Fort Sumter. The
lden and immeasurable enthusiasm of which this proc-
nation was the occasion throughout the North was
of the greatest surprises in the history of the Unit-
States. Two days later Jefferson Davis replied by
ing a proclamation offering letters of marque to
sons willing to aid the new government by making
risals upon the commerce of the United States. On
19th Lincoln rejoined by proclaiming a blockade
the ports of the seven states of the Confederacy,
declaring that if any person, under any pretence,
uld molest a vessel of the United States, or the per-
s or cargo on board of her, he should be treated as a
ate.[2]

n the first important despatch to William L. Dayton,
new Minister to France, on April 22d, Seward ac-

[1] Russell's *Diary*, 70, 71.

[2] On April 27th another proclamation announced an intention to
nd the blockade to North Carolina and Virginia.

knowledged the necessity of force to put down the rev
lution. With the increase of danger at home, his e
pressions against foreign interference became stronge
Whatever else the President might consent to do, h
would "never invoke or even admit foreign interferen
or influence in this or any other controversy in whic
the government of the United States may be engage
with any portion of the American people." After i
dicating that he had no apprehension of unfriendl
action on the part of France, he recorded this warnin
to whom it might concern:

"Foreign intervention would oblige us to treat thos
who should yield it as allies of the insurrectionary part
and to carry on the war against them as enemies. Th
case would not be relieved, but, on the contrary, woul
only be aggravated, if several European states should com
bine in that intervention. The President and the peop
of the United States deem the Union, which would the
be at stake, worth all the cost and all the sacrifices of
contest with the world in arms, if such a contest shoul
prove inevitable."[1]

A few days later Seward received an account of on
of Faulkner's last conversations with Thouvenel, th
French Minister of Foreign Affairs. Faulkner had to
Thouvenel that the only solution of the difficulty betwee
the North and the South would be to make alterations
the Constitution that would satisfy the seceding state
or peaceably to acquiesce in their assertion of sove
eignty. The instructions of May 4th, to Dayton, wh
was then on his way to Paris, show that Seward's ide
had taken definite shape:

"You cannot be too decided or too explicit in makin
known to the French government that there is not no
nor has there been, nor will there be any the least id
existing in this government of suffering a dissolution
this Union to take place in any way whatever."

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 200.

. . . "Tell Mr. Thouvenel, then, with the highest con-
leration and good feeling, that the thought of a dissolu-
on of this Union, peaceably or by force, has never entered
to the mind of any candid statesman here, and it is high
ne that it be dismissed by statesmen in Europe."[1]

Faulkner's despatch and Seward's instructions were
ven to the press; and the New York *Times* of the 7th
ported that stocks rose two per cent. on account of
e Secretary's declarations and the evidence afforded
current events that the government was determined
o meet this rebellion with vigor and resolution."
ward had made his language more emphatic each
eek, hoping to counteract the growing opinion in
rope that the United States government was lacking
courage and resources.

But the most formidable danger was the activity
at the diplomatic agents of the Confederacy were show-
g in Great Britain and in France. On March 16th
illiam L. Yancey, Pierre A. Rost, and A. Dudley Mann
ere appointed special commissioners to those and other
wers, for the purpose of securing recognition of the
dependence of the Confederate States and to negotiate
eaties of friendship and commerce. Secretary Toombs
structed them that it was the confident expectation of
e President and people of the Confederacy "that the
lightened government of Great Britain will speedily
knowledge our independence and welcome us among
e nations of the world"; and that it was not regarded
"within the range of possibility" that the seceded
ates could be induced to re-enter the Union.[2] Yancey
as primarily an orator and an agitator; he was a man

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 207, 208.

[2] Toombs to Yancey *et al.*, March 16th, 1861. MS. References to
MS. correspondence of all the Confederates are, unless otherwise
ted, to the diplomatic archives of the Confederacy, in the United
ates Treasury Department.

of fascinating manners, besides being a good representa tive of the slave-holding aristocracy. Rost was a Frenc man by birth, and, like Pierre Soulé, he early gaine distinction at the Louisiana bar, and became a judge o the supreme court of the state. It was expected tha he could effectively address his countrymen in their ow language about their interests in the Confederacy, an especially in Louisiana. Mann had had much experienc in both the diplomatic and the consular service of th United States. It was he that was sent on a specia mission to Hungary when the Whig and the Democrat politicians pretended to be so eager to help her gain i dependence.

The commissioners reached London about the tim the fall of Fort Sumter was reported. There had bee a great change in public opinion during the past si months. Europe had watched secession spread fro one locality to another, and from state to state, until controlled a whole section and then organized itself int a confederation with a general government that wa practically complete. No marked check had been pu upon the movement by the United States. As Sewar wrote: "Disunion, by surprise and impetuous passio took the first successes, and profited by them to mak public opinion in Europe."[1] Even the Sumter and th Pickens expeditions had evaded the main question as t whether the Washington government would reassert i authority over the whole country. The call for troop was the first decisive act. Many writers have take more pains to formulate a grievance against Grea Britain than to reach a fair understanding of the reaso and growth of her conclusions at this time. The wor knew that the seceding states were "thoroughly disa fected and insurrectionary"; and when northern leade

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 51.

ke Douglas, supported by the official statement of the ew Secretary of State, said that such states could not be ıbdued, Europe, and especially England, believed them. he revolution was so formidable, and apparently so omplete, that all but comparatively few Englishmen oncluded that a war against it would be unsuccessful, nd therefore wrong. That such a man as Cobden shared is opinion is strong evidence that it was an honest onviction.[1] As has been said, "This state of public pinion was natural, and not a subject for complaint so uch as for correction."[2]

Of course Great Britain and France had observed ith a jealous eye our growth as a commercial rival; nd it was with no pleasure that they had felt the exansive force of our boastful democracy. Irish-Ameriın agitators and blustering demagogues had done all ey could to arouse the hatred of Englishmen. British onservatives, who feared the influence of democratic iberals like Bright and Cobden, rejoiced when the reatest of democracies seemed to fail. Most Englishen regarded high tariffs as acts of hostility, for they nsidered free-trade as a sort of international right. s far as commerce was concerned, the low tariff of the onfederacy quickly attracted sympathy. The French ople had but little knowledge of the United States, cause commercial and political relations between the o nations were not close. But there were, in fact, any French interests that would be injured by the disption of the Union. It was, therefore, good policy for e United States to give prominence to this fact and cultivate an international friendship, so as to make it fficult for Napoleon to pursue his dynastic schemes.

According to Faulkner's report, Thouvenel believed at the preservation of the Union would be beneficial

[1] 2 Morley's *Cobden*, 372.

[2] Henry Adams, *Historical Essays*, 269.

to the North, to the South, and to France. But Thou venel had also declared that "the practice and usage o the present century had fully established the right o *de facto* governments to recognition when a proper cas was made out for the decision of foreign powers."[1] About the same time, Lord John Russell, the Britis Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, assured Georg M. Dallas that there was no disposition to take any ad vantage of the unpleasant domestic troubles in th United States; but Dallas stated that English publi opinion favored separation, and that it was expected tha W. H. Gregory, a member of the House of Common from Galway, would press a motion for the recognition o the Confederacy.[2] Early in May rumors of the issuanc of letters of marque by the Confederacy, and of Lincoln' declaration of a blockade, reached London. Russell wa much disturbed and requested Dallas to call. Whe Dallas appeared Russell informed him that the Con federate commissioners were in the city; that althoug they had not yet been seen, he was not unwilling to mee them "*unofficially*," and that France and Great Britai had agreed "to take the same course as to recognition whatever that course might be," as Dallas reported. About the same date Russell announced in the House o Commons that a British naval force sufficient to protec British shipping was to be sent to the coast of the Unit ed States; and that it was the intention of the govern ment to avoid taking any part in the American contest.

When Seward learned these facts he became greatly excited. The agreement of the two great powers t act together seemed to be very threatening. It plain ly indicated an expectation that by joint action they could safely pursue the policy best suited to their po litical and commercial interests. The evident assump

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 205.
[2] *Dip. Cor.*, 84.
[3] *Dip. Cor.*, 81, 82.
[4] *Dip. Cor.*, 84, 85.

n was that their lead would be followed by other ions, and that the United States would not be able resist the force of the current.[1] A letter Seward te home, May 17th, gives this strange account of self and of his aims:

A country so largely relying on my poor efforts to save ad [has] refused me the full measure of its confidence, lful to that end. I am a chief reduced to a subordinate tion, and surrounded by a guard, to see that I do not oo much for my country, lest some advantage may re- indirectly to my own fame."

. . "They have misunderstood things fearfully, in ope. Great Britain is in great danger of sympathizing nuch with the South, for the sake of peace and cotton, o drive us to make war against her, as the ally of the tors. If that comes it will be the strife of the younger ch of the British stock, for freedom, against the older, slavery. It will be dreadful, but the end will be sure swift. My last despatches from Great Britain and nce have shown that they were almost ready, on some ext, to try and save cotton, at the cost of the Union. n trying to get a bold remonstrance through the Cab- before it is too late."[2]

he long despatch of May 21st, to Adams, was the lt. It began with the declaration that our relations n European powers had reached a crisis, and that it necessary for our government "to take a decided d, on which not only its immediate measures but ltimate and permanent policy can be determined and ned."[3] A few quotations will best indicate what this d was:

Intercourse of any kind with the so-called commission- s liable to be construed as a recognition of the authority

[1] few weeks later the British and the French Ministers at Wash- n agreed that the best way "of preventing an inconvenient out- from this [the United States] government lay in making the e of Great Britain and France as nearly as possible identical."— itish *State Papers*, 557.

[2] Seward, 575.

[3] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 87 ff.

which appointed them. Such intercourse would be n
the less hurtful to us for being called unofficial, and
might be even more injurious, because we should have
means of knowing what points might be resolved by
Moreover, unofficial intercourse is useless and meaning
if it is not expected to ripen into official intercourse
direct recognition. . . . You will, in any event, desist fr
all intercourse whatever, unofficial as well as official, w
the British government, so long as it shall continue in
course of either kind with the domestic enemies of t
country. When intercourse shall have been arrested
this cause, you will communicate with this departm
and receive further directions."[1]

Because the joint action of France and Great Brit
had been already announced, but not put into pract
Seward doubtless inferred that a protest against it j
then would be ineffectual, and therefore unwise. It
too late to treat it theoretically and too soon to deal w
it as a serious problem. So it was noticed in frien
and somewhat vague sentences and left to the future

"As to the blockade, you will say that by our own l
and the laws of nature, and the laws of nations, this g
ernment has a clear right to suppress insurrection.
exclusion of commerce from national ports which h
been seized by insurgents, in the equitable form of blo
ade, is a proper means to that end. You will not in
that our blockade is to be respected, if it be not maintai
by a competent force ; but passing by that question as
now a practical or, at least, an urgent one, you will
that the blockade is now, and it will continue to be
maintained, and therefore we expect it to be respected
Great Britain. You will add that we have already revo
the exequatur of a Russian consul who had enlisted in
military service of the insurgents, and we shall disn
or demand the recall of every foreign agent, consular
diplomatic, who shall either disobey the Federal laws
disown the Federal authority.

"As to the recognition of the so-called Southern C
federacy, it is not to be made the subject of technical

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 88.

ion. It is, of course, direct recognition to publish an nowledgment of the sovereignty and independence of ew power. It is direct recognition to receive its am- sadors, ministers, agents, or commissioners officially. oncession of belligerent rights is liable to be construed a recognition of them. No one of these proceedings pass unquestioned by the United States in this e. . . .

As to the treatment of privateers in the insurgent ser- e, you will say that this is a question exclusively our n. We treat them as pirates. They are our own citi- s, or persons employed by our citizens, preying on the mmerce of our country. If Great Britain shall choose recognize them as lawful belligerents, and give them lter from our pursuit and punishment, the laws of na- ns afford an adequate and proper remedy.[1]

These positions are not elaborately defended now, be- se to vindicate them would imply a possibility of our ving them.

We are not insensible of the grave importance of this asion. We see how, upon the result of the debate in ch we are engaged, a war may ensue between the ited States and one, two, or even more European na- ns. War in any case is exceptional from the habits, as it evolting from the sentiments of the American people. if it come it will be fully seen that it results from the on of Great Britain, not our own; that Great Britain have decided to fraternize with our domestic enemy ier without waiting to hear from you our remonstrances our warnings, or after having heard them. War in ence of national life is not immoral, and war in defence ndependence is an inevitable part of the discipline of ions.

The dispute will lie between the European and the erican branches of the British race. All who belong to t race will especially deprecate it, as they ought. It well be believed that men of every race and kindred deplore it. A war not unlike it between the same par- occurred at the close of the last century. Europe ned by forty years of suffering for the error that Great tain committed in provoking that contest. If that na- shall now repeat the same great error, the social con- sions which will follow may not be so long, but they will

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 89.

be more general. When they shall have ceased, it will think, be seen, whatever may have been the fortune other nations, that it is not the United States that will h come out of them with its precious Constitution alte or its honestly obtained dominions in any degree abridg Great Britain has but to wait a few months, and all present inconveniences will cease with all our own troub If she take a different course she will calculate for her the ultimate as well as the immediate consequences, will consider what position she will hold when she s have forever lost the sympathies and affections of the nation on whose sympathies and affections she has a ural claim. In making that calculation she will do wel remember that in the controversy she proposes to open shall be actuated by neither pride, nor passion, nor pidity, nor ambition; but we shall stand simply on principle of self-preservation, and that our cause will volve the independence of nations and the rights of hu nature."[1]

The instructions as sent differed in several import respects from their original form. The "remonstran laid before the Cabinet was "bold" to the point of fiance. It contained words and sentences that wo have warranted the inference that we desired Seward's plan was that Adams should give Russe copy of this paper and then break off diplomatic relati with the British government, a rupture that should as long as Russell continued to hold either official unofficial intercourse "with the domestic enemies of country." There had been wisdom in Seward's ca warnings that intervention would mean war, but hith he had been careful to keep diplomatic relations ope as to prevent matters from reaching a crisis. As ye had no knowledge that Russell intended to do more t receive the commissioners unofficially. To assume a serious offence has been committed, and then to s what is practically an ultimatum, and to cut off di

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 90.

tic intercourse, is generally regarded as the sort of lying that a spirited nation must resent. Fortunately, ıcoln was as calm and firm as on April 1st. What he ected then was not to be approved now, when it re- ned in a different form. He struck out most of the iscreet expressions, and made the whole despatch rmless by directing Adams to regard it as strictly ıfidential. This placed a safe buffer between the tish and the United States Secretaries.[1]

Seward had again fallen victim to the incomprehen- le illusion that if, contrary to his firm belief, the ıfederacy could not be peacefully undermined and gotiated out of existence, then a foreign war would a "sure and swift" means of overcoming the diffi- ties. Of course he did not, in the abstract, desire a eign war any more than he did a civil one; but had the greatest fear of a conflict with the South, ereas he would not have hesitated to fight a few of great powers of Europe. The only theory on which illusion can be explained, even from his point of w, is that by giving full play to his imagination he strengthened in the belief that the Union could not restored unless the "chief" could get free from his ıbordinate position" and push aside the "guard" t was preventing him from doing too much for his ntry, and that all could be accomplished by means a foreign war, which would put him in control, be- se it would grow out of questions within the prov- of his duties. He was reasoning as if the best way surmount great obstacles were to make them twice hrice as great. On the other hand, those who have d to make it appear that Lincoln was a great diplo- tist because he pruned and altered Seward's draft,

[1] For the copies of the original draft, with Lincoln's alterations and ments, see 4 Nicolay and Hay, 470 ff., and 142 *North American ew*, 405 ff.

have begun their measurements from the wrong poin
In this instance it was Seward's recklessness,—not Li
coln's wisdom,—that was remarkable. Lincoln he
acted as Seward's sober second thought, just as Sewa
had been Lincoln's in the inaugural address, and was
be again, still more distinctly, in dealing with the *Tre*
affair.

A passage from a letter Seward wrote to Weed, Ma
23d, shows that the Secretary was in a highly nervou
and unjudicial state of mind:

"The European phase is bad. But your apprehensio
that I may be too decisive alarms me more. Will you co
sent, or advise us to consent, that Adams and Dayton hav
audiences and compliments in the Minister's Audienc
Chamber, and Toombs' emissaries have access to his bed
room? Shall there be no compromise at home, and sha
we compromise everything in Europe? Private recogn
tion gives currency to southern bonds."[1]

As far as the Secretary of State had learned, Grea
Britain was still considering whether the declaration
a blockade and the issuance of letters of marque calle
for any official action on her part.

It was about the middle of April that Lincoln an
his Cabinet first began to discuss among themselves th
relative advantages of attempting to close Confederat
ports by law or proclamation, or to put them unde
naval blockade. A majority preferred to pronounc
them closed, as the best means of weakening the Co
federates without seeming to acknowledge a state
war.[2] But the President had no power to do this in tim
of peace, and Congress was not to meet for nearly thr
months. If there was no way to cut off communic
tions with the Confederacy except by resorting to
belligerent right, then the most effective right should

[1] 2 Seward, 576.

[2] Welles, 122 ff.

rcised. Seward favored a blockade because the rules erning it were positive and well known. And as question was one belonging to his department, the inet yielded to his advice.[1]

According to international law, a blockade such as the ited States proposed to adopt is permissible only be- een belligerents. Its purpose is to isolate and weaken enemy. That this may be done effectively, the mer- ntmen of neutral nations may be stopped and searched the high seas, and in case they bear contraband of for the enemy, or are bound for a blockaded port, y may be seized and brought before a prize court for demnation. In calling for privateers to destroy the ited States merchantmen, which were extensive car- s of the goods of foreigners, the Confederacy was resorting to a measure that is lawful only in time ar. It was evident that both governments intended xercise these special prerogatives. The prosecution he respective plans of the Washington and the Mont- nery governments was sure to have a very impor- influence upon the interests of all maritime nations. en arguing another question, subsequently, but speak- of the status as early as April 24, 1861, Seward said "we supposed the French government would nat- ly feel a deep anxiety about the safety of their com- ce, threatened distinctly with privateering by the rgents."[2] Writing to Adams, May 28, 1862, about e position which the Federal government held a year " Seward declared: "Then it had been practically elled, with all its authorities, civil, military, and na- from every state south of the Potomac, Ohio, and souri rivers, while it was held in close siege in this tal, cut off from communication with even the states ch had remained loyal."[3]

[1] Welles, 123.

[2] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 232.

[3] *Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 102.

Before it became definitely known that a blocka had been declared and that privateers had been call for, Dallas reported that on May 1st Russell had "a quiesced in the expediency of disregarding mere rum and waiting the full knowledge to be brought by n successor."[1] This was subsequently misrepresented, ar has often been stated historically as a positive promi to delay action until Adams's arrival, however well th rumors might be confirmed or however pressing politic or commercial considerations might become.

Authoritative reports of the American proclamatio led Russell to decide by May 6th that the British go ernment was bound to recognize that the parties to th conflict were in a position "to claim the rights and perform the obligations attaching to belligerents."[2] S on May 13th—the day Adams reached London, and b fore he had time to call at the Foreign Office—the Briti proclamation of neutrality was issued. It announce the government's purpose to preserve a strict neutra ity in the hostilities "unhappily commenced betwe the government of the United States and certain stat styling themselves the Confederate States of America British subjects were warned that any violation of th neutrality would incur certain penal consequences. Th important point was that this document officially co ceded belligerent rights to the Confederates. The oth maritime powers waited for Great Britain to take th lead, because the extent of her dominions and commer in North America made the question most important her. Within a few weeks France, Spain, the Nethe lands, Prussia, and other nations followed her exampl

Throughout Seward's secretaryship he frequently r peated a long complaint against Great Britain on a count of the alleged injustice of recognizing that a sta

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 84.

[2] 55 *State Papers*, 548, 549.

war existed between the United States and the Confederate governments, and thousands of books and articles have reiterated his unsound reasoning. For him and the others who wrote in the excitement of the time, there is some excuse, but a subsequent generation should easily avoid his error. Great Britain was neither especially friendly nor especially unfriendly toward the United States: there was no occasion for either. The question of belligerency was one of fact, which had been settled by the respective acts of the hostile governments. It remained for Great Britain and the other powers to recognize this fact at once or whenever it might suit their convenience and interests. Therefore, there was not the slightest obligation on Russell's part—after receiving reliable information as to what had taken place in America—to postpone a decision until he had heard Adams's argument. The temper in which Seward and Adams argued the question would seem to indicate that Russell showed superior diplomacy by doing all he could to avoid discussing the merits of a course that he knew would be taken in any case. If Great Britain had wished to manifest marked friendship for the United States, instead of assuming a position of strict neutrality, she had a good opportunity to do so by delaying action, and thereby influencing other nations to do the same. Although neither of the American governments had any substantial basis for expecting positive assistance, it will be seen again and again in the course of this narrative that it was the disappointment of this expectation that inspired the most frequent and bitter complaints on the part of each belligerent.[1]

[1] The following letter of July 12, 1861, from Lord John Russell to Edward Everett is an accurate exposition of the opinions—some sound, others erroneous—that controlled the action of the British government during the first few months of the Civil War:

. . . "In the interval before a fresh item arises I will write a few

By the time the despatch of May 21st reached En land, the United States Ministers in London and in Pa respectively had concluded that the sympathy with t Confederacy was much less positive than they had su posed. They were informed that it was the custom both France and Great Britain unofficially to recei such envoys as the Confederate commissioners, and hear what they had to say.[1] Russell told Adams th

lines as to our position. I shall say little as to yours. I respect unanimous feeling of the North, and still more the resolutions not permit the extension of slavery which led to the election of Presid Lincoln. But with regard to our course, I must say something mo There were, according to your account, eight million of free men the slave states. Of these millions upwards of five have been some time in open revolt against the President and Congress of United States. It is not our practice to treat five millions of free m as pirates and to hang their sailors if they attempt to stop our m chantmen. But unless we meant to treat them as pirates and to ha them we could not deny them belligerent rights. This is what y and we did in the case of the South American colonies of Spain. Yo own President and courts of law decided this question in the case Venezuela. Your press has studiously confused the case by calling allowance of belligerent rights by the name of recognition. But y must well know the difference.

"It seems to me, however, that you have expected us to discours the South. How this was to be done, except by waging war agai them, I am at a loss to imagine.

"I confess, likewise, that I can see no good likely to arise from present contest. If on the 4th of March you had allowed the C federate States to go out from among you you could have preven the extension of slavery and confined it to the slave-holding stat But if I understand your Constitution aright you cannot do more case of successful war, if you mean to adhere to its provisions and keep faith with those states and parts of states, wherever slavery exists, which have not quitted the Union.

"I regret the Morrill tariff and hope it will be repealed. But exclusion of our manufactures was surely an odd way of conciliati our good-will."—MS.

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 104, 219. In an unprinted portion of the latter spatch, Dayton reported: "Besides, he [Thouvenel] said, he had ceived him [Rost] because he felt it a duty to get all the information could and obtain knowledge of facts, in reference to matters of

had seen the commissioners but twice, and had no expectation of seeing them again.[1] Adams inferred that Russell meant this to be satisfactory to our government. He also suggested that, since her Britannic Majesty's ministers had manifested a desire to modify the effects of their early precipitation, a corresponding tone would be advisable on the part of the Department of State.[2] But before these opinions became known in Washington, Seward had recovered his balance and was penning friendly, even courtly, sentences to be read to Russell and to Thouvenel.[3] Perhaps he remembered that he himself had recently communicated, through three different intermediaries, with the Confederate commissioners to Washington, and would have met them if the President had not forbidden it. If the thought occurred to him that the intercourse might be no more profitable in one instance than it had been in the other, it was evidence of increasing wisdom. In any case he seems to have given up forever his irrational theory of the salutary effect of a foreign war.

Americans would not have been so much alarmed had they not, at first, failed to comprehend just what the granting of belligerent rights meant. They also feared that the proclamation of neutrality was the beginning of a policy designed to help the Confederacy. The rush of events and the inaccuracy of reports prevented many even of the wisest men from forming correct opinions. Thus, on June 1, 1861, Great Britain issued an order in-

[1] importance, from all possible sources. That for this purpose he had received all sorts of people. That on the same day he had received envoys from Garibaldi and the King of Naples. Besides this, he wished, he said, to inform Mr. Rost of the inutility of now seeking from the French government a recognition of the independence of the Southern Confederates."

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 104.

[2] Adams to Seward, June 14, 1861. MS.

[3] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 98, 101, 231.

terdicting "the armed ships, and also the privateers, both parties, from carrying prizes made by them into t ports, harbors, roadsteads, or waters of the United Kin dom, or of any of her Majesty's colonies or possessio abroad," it was seen that this could not have been prom ed by partiality toward the Confederacy. "The noti cation is, in fact, an act of effective hostility against t South," said the New York *Times*, June 18th. It was foregone conclusion that other nations would issue sin lar decrees. Excluded from foreign ports, and kept o of their own by the blockade, where could Confederat take their prizes? If the reward should become ve doubtful, privateers would not long remain on the ocea Seward expected that it would be a death-blow to Co federate privateering, and within a year he reported Adams that the "pirates" had withdrawn.[1] Early June, 1861, it was announced that Gregory's moveme in the House of Commons to obtain the recognition the Confederacy had been abandoned;[2] but this was n true.

These were manifestations of a decline of sympat with the Confederacy, but there was no certain indicati that Great Britain and France might not, in their ow interests, take measures that would be very injurious the cause of the Union. In fact, on June 15, 1861, th made their first attempt to carry out their plan of joi action—not to aid the new government, but to prote themselves. The French and the British Ministers a peared at the Department of State and asked to be ceived together. Knowing what this meant, Sewa had them shown into the Assistant Secretary's roo He soon entered, smiling and shaking his head as protested: "No, no. This will never do. I cannot

[1] Bernard's *Neutrality of Great Britain*, 133; *Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 10
[2] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 103.

u in that way." One Minister suggested that they re carrying out their instructions, and the other urged it they should be allowed to state the object of their l. "No," said Seward, "we must start right about whatever it is. M. Mercier, will you do me the favor come to dine with me this evening? There we can k over your business at leisure. And if Lord Lyons l step into my room with me, now, we will discuss at he has to say to me." They pleasantly objected to plan, but Seward positively declined to receive them gether. Then he asked them to leave their papers, t he might examine them informally.[1] "Mr. Sew-'s language and demeanor throughout the interview re calm, friendly, and good-humored," as Lyons re-ted to Russell.[2]

n looking over the documents he learned that the governments intended to ask both the United States l the Confederacy to adopt certain rules making the perty of neutrals and that of an enemy (if under a tral flag) free from capture, when not contraband of r. This was also the first attempt to announce di-tly to the United States that they were divided into belligerent parties, between which other powers as-ned the attitude of neutrals. To allow this plan to carried out would have been an acquiescence both in position of France and Great Britain toward the nfederacy and in their scheme to act jointly. There-e, Seward promptly handed back the communica-ns and would not allow them to be formally pre-ted. This was one of the first positive signs Seward e of talent for his new duties. There was diplomatic l of the best quality in the way he thwarted the pur-es of Russell and Thouvenel.

[1] This account closely follows that of Mr. F. W. Seward, who s to have been present.—2 Seward, 581; *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 106.
[2] 55 *State Papers*, 560.

The official explanations Seward made to Adams ar to Dayton were strong, dignified, and in proper tempe To one he said:

"The United States are still solely and exclusively so ereign within the territories they have lawfully acquire and long possessed, as they have always been. . . . Th are living under the obligations of the law of nations, ar of treaties with Great Britain, just the same now as her tofore; they are, of course, the friend of Great Britai and they insist that Great Britain shall remain their frie now, just as she has hitherto been. Great Britain, by vi tue of these relations, is a stranger to parties and sectio in this country, whether they are loyal to the United Stat or not, and Great Britain can neither rightfully qualify t sovereignty of the United States, nor concede, nor reco nize any rights, or interests, or power of any party, stat or section, in contravention to the unbroken sovereign of the Federal Union."[1]

He would not enter into any argument of fact or law; for the position was one of self-defence—"the p mary law of human action." The government was se sible of the importance of the step it had taken, and still hoped that friendly relations might continue. H expressed a belief that Great Britain had acted ina vertently or from exaggerated apprehensions of da ger to her commerce. He claimed that all that Gre Britain then asked as a neutral had already been offer her as a friend.[2]

"We are anxious," he said, "to avoid all causes of mi understanding with Great Britain; to draw closer, inste of breaking, the existing bonds of amity and friendshi There is nothing good or great which both nations m not expect to attain or effect, if they remain friends. would be a hazardous day for both the branches of t British race when they should determine to try how muc harm each could do the other."[3]

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 107.

[2] This refers to the offer of the United States to accede to the dec ration of Paris, which will soon be noticed. [3] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 108.

Great Britain had also offered her services as medi-
r. Adams was instructed to say that the United
tes could not "solicit or accept mediation from any,
n the most friendly quarter."

Seward said that the fountains of discontent in every
iety were many, but that as yet only those lying
rest the surface had been disturbed. If the deeper
s should be opened, when could they be closed?
d then he concluded his impressive despatch with
s very significant sentence: "It was foreign inter-
tion that opened, and that alone could open, similar
ntains in the memorable French revolution."[1]

One passage in the despatch to Dayton was peculiarly
quent in expressing his determination to resist foreign
erference, which he feared was coming:

"Every uncorrupted nation, in its deliberate moments,
fers its own integrity, even with unbearable evils, to
ision through the power or influence of any foreign
te. This is so in France. It is not less so in this coun-
. Down deep in the heart of the American people—
per than the love of trade, or of freedom—deeper than
attachment to any local or sectional interest, or partisan
le or individual ambition—deeper than any other senti-
nt—is that one out of which the Constitution of this
ion arose—namely, American Independence—indepen-
ce of all foreign control, alliance, or influence."[2]

n an unpublished despatch of July 1, 1861, to Day-
, he made his clearest and most characteristic ex-
nation of what the attitude of the government must
in regard to the action of the foreign nations that
recognized the belligerency of the "insurgents":

Neither Great Britain nor France, separately nor both
ether, can, by any declaration they can make, impair
sovereignty of the United States over the insurgents,
confer upon them any public rights whatever. From
to last we have acted, and we shall continue to act,

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 109. [2] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 228.

for the whole people of the United States, and to mal treaties for disloyal as well as loyal citizens with forei nations, and shall expect, when the public welfare requir it, foreign nations to respect and observe the treaties.

"We do not admit, and we never shall admit, even th fundamental statement you assume—namely, that Gre Britain and France have recognized the insurgents as belligerent party. True, you say they have so declare We reply: Yes, but they have not declared so to us. Yo may rejoin: Their public declaration concludes the fac We, nevertheless, reply: It must be not their declaratio but the fact, that concludes the fact."

It was probably a surprise to Seward that Thouven and Russell made no complaint on account of his r fusal to entertain their propositions. The fact w that these statesmen had come to a better understan ing of the problems in hand. Although Thouven had told Rost that recognition was merely a matter time, the commissioners early concluded that Gre Britain would take no final action until after the fir decided Confederate success.[1] On June 10th Rost an Yancey wrote from Paris: "Our opinion is that th government of England simply waits to see which sha prove strongest, and that it is sincere in its express design to be neutral." They thought that all they cou do was to influence public sentiment in an unobtrusi manner until some favorable event at home should fu nish an occasion for them to press for recognition. July 15th Yancey and Mann reported that Napole considered his European policy so important to Fran that he would wait to follow Great Britain's lead on t American question. It is uncertain how much Seward threats had to do with the apparent moderation or ca tion of either government. Adams believed that Gre Britain's inclination to enter into negotiations with t Confederates would have been yielded to "in regul

[1] Commissioners to Toombs, May 21, 1861. MS.

ırse of time but for the warning which came from e other side of the Atlantic against precipitation. In u of the former rashness has come a proportionate ıidity."[1]

About the time Seward thought he had got rid of the ost troublesome questions, a new one arose, although was as yet merely theoretical. The administration d chosen the blockade as the surest way to weaken e Confederacy; but many continued to believe that it s a mistake to try to watch a coast three thousand les in length. If the ports could be closed effective- by law, then the ships so widely scattered could be ought together and used to conquer southern cities d districts on the seaboard; and this would prevent e Confederates from concentrating their strength in nt of Washington. It was understood that Great tain and France would not respect an attempt to se the ports by proclamation. A civil war was then progress in New Granada, and the government in that ıntry had adopted this method against its insurgents. ssell told Adams that the British Cabinet, after con- ering this case, had decided that in the event of in- rection or civil war, a country could not close the ts that were *de facto* in the possession of the insur- ıts; for that would not be a blockade according to ernational law.[2] Before Adams's report of this con- sation reached the United States, Congress had au- rized President Lincoln to close the ports held by Confederates. It does not appear that Seward then hed the President to declare a paper blockade in this irect way, but he considered it his duty. to let no med right seem to lapse by failing to deny the Brit- dictum. What he did was to inform Great Britain

[1] Adams to Seward, June 21, 1861. MS.
[2] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 111.

that the law merely granted the authority; that th President approved the principle of the law, and woul exercise the power whenever the safety of the natio required it.

This was not asserted pugnaciously, but only wit such clearness as suited the circumstances. Of cours he made it plain again that fear of war would not pr vent the United States from exercising their rights, bu even this was not said until after he had significantl and diplomatically remarked:

"I may add, also, for myself, that however otherwise may at any time have been understood, it has been an ea nest and profound solicitude to avert foreign war that alon has prompted the emphatic and sometimes, perhaps, im passioned remonstrances I have hitherto made against an form or measure of recognition of the insurgents by th government of Great Britain. I write in the same spir now, and I invoke on the part of the British governmen as I propose to exercise on my own, the calmness which a counsellors ought to practise in debates which involve th peace and happiness of mankind." [1]

This despatch bore the date of July 21, 1861 — th day of the first battle of Bull Run. He said that h could not close without again asking Great Britain t realize that the policy of the government was "base on interests of the greatest importance and sentiment of the highest virtue, and, therefore, is in no case likel to be changed, whatever may be the varying fortun of the war at home or the actions of foreign nations o this subject, while the policy of foreign states rests o ephemeral interests of commerce and ambition merel The policy of the United States is not a creature of th government, but an inspiration of the people, while th policies of foreign states are at the choice mainly of th governments presiding over them." [2]

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 118.

[2] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 121.

CHAPTER XXXI

O DIPLOMATIC INCIDENTS: SEWARD AND THE DECLARATION OF PARIS; BRITISH AND FRENCH "NEGOTIATIONS" WITH THE CONFEDERACY

ır was inevitable that the differences of opinion as the belligerency of the Confederacy would lead to er disagreements. In fact, nearly a month before y power had formally recognized that belligerency vard formed a plan by which he hoped to remove excuse for such action. But, after recognition, other ps naturally followed, and these were the cause of cussions in which much cleverness was displayed by diplomatists on each side.

A congress of the leading maritime powers of Europe, d in Paris in 1856, agreed to the following rules, ich are commonly called the declaration of Paris:

1. Privateering is and remains abolished.

2. The neutral flag covers enemy's goods, with the eption of contraband of war.

3. Neutral goods, with the exception of contraband war, are not liable to capture under enemy's flag.

4. Blockades, in order to be binding, must be effective; that is to say, maintained by forces sufficient lly to prevent access to the coast of the enemy."

As the first three provisions were not well-established es of international law, and were binding only upon contracting nations, the other maritime states were ited to adopt them. In replying for the United States, retary Marcy pointed out several reasons why they

could not be accepted by his country without disadva tage, unless certain alterations should be made. Th first article was objected to, because the United State had not adopted the policy of keeping a large navy i time of peace, and, therefore, might find it important t use privateers in case of war. But it could be rendere acceptable, Marcy suggested, if all the private propert of individuals, though belonging to belligerent nation should be made exempt from seizure or confiscatio in maritime war.[1] All efforts toward a realization Marcy's plan were unsuccessful. Buchanan's admini tration broke off the negotiations.

Shortly after the fall of Fort Sumter, when the que tions of belligerency and of issuing letters of marque b the Confederacy arose, Seward saw that it might be a vantageous to the United States to change their positio Because the Confederacy had no merchant marine wort mentioning, probably the United States would have n occasion to send out privateers. Therefore, as far a the present conflict was concerned, the United State had practically nothing to lose by agreeing to aboli privateering. On the other hand, it was expected tha much of the naval success of the Confederacy mus depend on the destruction of northern merchantme Confederate privateers would also interfere with th goods of Europeans, especially when carried under ou flag. If these privateers could be kept off the ocea it would save the maritime nations much annoyanc Assuming that the adherence of the United States t the declaration of Paris would bring about this resu it was to be expected that the other powers would we come such a step. Here, then, Seward believed that h had a great opportunity to gain the advantages alread

[1] Stated more fully in Marcy's instructions to the United States Mi ister to Belgium, July 14, 1856. MS. See also *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 34, 2

ntioned, and a much greater one, of which he was
eful not to speak at the beginning.

On April 24, 1861, he instructed our Ministers to the
ding European powers that the United States were
lling to assent to the declaration pure and simple, if
e Marcy amendment should not be acceptable.[1] He
d Dayton that two motives induced the United States
assume this position, as far as France was concerned:
irst, a sincere desire to co-operate with other pro-
ssive nations in the melioration of the rigors of
ritime war; second, a desire to relieve France of any
prehension of danger to the lives or property of her
ple from violence to occur in the course of the civil
nflict in which we are engaged."[2] A further motive
to be found in another despatch, which says: "In
s way we expected to remove every cause that any
eign power could have for the recognition of the in-
gents as a belligerent power."[3]

The parties to the declaration of Paris agreed that
y would make common cause among themselves in
orcing its articles. Some months after the original
posal of accession was made, Seward said that "we
dered it, of course, as the act of this Federal govern-
nt, to be obligatory equally upon disloyal as upon
al citizens."[4] It did not require the gift of prophecy
tell what would result in case the offer of accession
the part of the United States should be accepted.

The governments of Great Britain and of France
med to receive the proposition with favor, although
e Queen's proclamation had already recognized the
ligerency of the Confederacy when this subject was
t presented. Lord John Russell gave Adams to un-
stand that Lord Lyons had been authorized to enter
o a similar agreement with our government.

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 34–36.
[2] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 233.
[3] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 251.
[4] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 232.

Dayton early foresaw difficulties. Very ingenuously he suggested to Seward that, since the British government had shut its ports against the Confederate privateers, and thereby greatly limited their privileges, the accession of the United States to the declaration had become less urgent; and that because European nations had recognized the belligerency of the Confederacy, our becoming a party to the declaration would not affect that action.[1]

This was exactly what Seward did not wish to hear mentioned. So he very pointedly indicated to Dayton that he was reasoning from false premises in adopting the plea that the insurgents "were necessarily a belligerent power because the British and French governments have chosen in some of their public papers to say they are so."[2] At the same time he distinctly informed Dayton that this was not to alter the purpose of the administration in regard to the declaration. It was Seward's nature to increase in persistency as the obstacles became greater. So both Adams and Dayton were directed to press forward with their tasks. "But in doing this," he said to Dayton, "you will neither unnecessarily raise a question about the character in which this government acts (being exclusive sovereign) nor, on the other hand, in any way compromise that character in any degree."[3] This was significant.

The foreign diplomatists had their eyes open from the start. On May 18th Russell wrote to Lord Lyons that her Majesty's government could not accept an offer on the part of the United States not to do any privateering, "if coupled with the condition that they should enforce its renunciation upon the Confederate States either by denying their right to issue letters of marque

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 220. [2] Seward to Dayton, July 1, 1861. MS.
[3] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 234.

by interfering with the belligerent operations of ves- holding from them such letters of marque."[1] A night later Lord Lyons said that it was undoubted- he purpose of the United States to make the parties he declaration treat the Confederates as pirates;[2] Thouvenel early saw that this would be a logical and.

However, on July 18, 1861, Russell informed Adams the British government would be ready to enter a convention with the United States about their ession to the declaration, as soon as the United tes should be prepared to make a similar agreement n France.[3] Conventions of identical import were fted at London and at Paris, and were ready for sig- ure; then there came a sudden halt. Dayton, who been severely criticised by Seward, had the melan- ly satisfaction of reporting to the department that "anticipations" had been "fully realized"; for Russell Thouvenel had each refused to negotiate except on distinct understanding—and a written statement at time of completing the arrangement—that the ad- sion of the United States to the declaration should e no bearing, directly or indirectly, on the question ur domestic difficulty.[4] The British and the French retaries clearly explained the reason for their de- nd: their governments had recognized the Confeder- as belligerents, and were bound to respect their t to arm vessels as privateers, while the United tes had insisted upon regarding the privateers as tes; therefore the United States might claim that all parties to a convention "declaring that privateering and remains abolished would be bound to treat privateers of the so-called Confederate States as tes." Both Russell and Thouvenel feared that,

[1] 55 British *State Papers*, 555.
[2] *Ibid.*, 557.
[3] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 116.
[4] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 242.

without an explicit statement in advance, the agreeme would lead straight to a dispute.[1] The British Secreta emphasized the importance of such precaution by refe ring to the serious differences that had occurred abo "the precise meaning of words and the intention of those who made the Clayton-Bulwer treaty. The illu tration was very pointed, so far as Seward was co cerned; for, as has been noticed, he had argued on bo sides of this troublesome question.

Seward's replies showed that he felt little less tha contempt for the reasoning of his two great opp nents. To admit a special explanation would virtual introduce a new and distinct article into the project convention; it "would, for the first time in the histo of the United States, be to permit a foreign power take cognizance of and adjust its relations upon assum internal and purely domestic differences existing with our own country."[2] He also considered the propositi to be an unjust discrimination against the United State because it aimed to treat the conditions here as exce tional, without making a like provision for similar c cumstances in other countries in the future. The poi was that there should be no distinction between a nati with a formidable insurrection and a nation that mig some time have one. Nor would he admit that the a ceptance of the plain proposition of the United Stat would in any way involve the other powers in our i ternal affairs.

"But if such should be its effect, I must, in the fi place, disclaim any desire for such an intervention on t part of the United States. The whole of this long cor spondence has had for one of its objects the purpose averting any such intervention. If, however, such an i tervention would be the result of the unqualified executi of the convention by France, then the fault clearly mu

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 145, 146, 242, 252.

[2] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 142.

herent in the declaration of the congress of Paris , and it is not a result of anything that the United s have done or proposed."[1]

must often have been noticed, in the course of this tive, that Seward had a fondness for an argument is kind. It was delightfully theoretical, and su- ially it seemed to be conclusive, although it avoid- ne main question. On July 6, 1861, he called on Lyons and explained the complications, as he ed them, in which Dayton had involved the nego- ns. He was very anxious that the accession of United States to the declaration should at once place, saying that its effect upon the states in t could be determined afterward. At the same he assured the British Minister that the United s would do all in their power to protect the com- e of friends from the attacks of the so-called priva- , and would hang the privateer crews as pirates. ward had not intended to use the adherence of United States to the declaration as a lever to force ther powers to treat the Confederates as pirates, least to cease regarding them as belligerents, he t easily and unofficially have removed all such ions. On the contrary, the interview strength- Lyons's fears; so that he gave Russell the most atic warning that the only way to prevent "seri- isputes" in the future would be to state "formal- d distinctly beforehand" what the effect would the Confederacy.[2] Probably it was this advice caused Russell to insist on the explanatory declar-

s difficult either to understand how Seward could expected Russell and Thouvenel to walk into such in broad daylight, or how he could have profited

[1] *Corr.*, 1861, 251. [2] 55 *State Papers*, 566–67.

by it in any case. They would not have accepted
theory of the significance of the accession of the Uni
States, and this would only have made more consp
ous our connivance at the European recognition of C
federate belligerency. Seward's claim, that there
no difference between a nation entirely at peace and
in circumstances like those of the United States at t
time, could not be taken seriously. It was the dif
ence between a solvent man and an insolvent one,
tween recognized sovereignty and disputed sovereign
between peace and war. This was shown by the in
putable fact that it was not possible for the Uni
States to prevent the fitting out of privateers by
Confederates. Every other nation had the ability, wi
it became a party to the declaration, to carry out
pledges. For Seward to grant for the moment t
it would be interference on the part of other powers
deal with Confederate privateersmen as if they w
pirates, and then to pretend that, therefore, he co
have had no such idea in mind, was to belie the cl
purpose of his arguments for months. Dayton ag
summarized the whole situation when he wrote
Thouvenel: "If, therefore, the government of Fra
shall consider that an unconditional execution of t
convention will demand of it interference in our affa
or will implicate it in any shape in the civil war r
raging in our country, then it is obvious that this is
a proper time for her or for us to enter into such ag
ments."[1] There is nothing to indicate that Sew
would have accepted anything less than "the unc
ditional execution of that convention." Therefore,
was plainly acting out of season, and he was furnish
his opponents with evidences of his lack of candor.

These contentions were all the more unfortunate

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 247.

se they lessened the good results that would natural-
have followed a wise and generous policy toward
trals, which had doubtless been in Seward's mind
n the beginning.

Regarding this negotiation as at an end," he wrote to
ms, "the question arises, What, then, are to be the
s and policy of the United States in regard to the
ts of neutrals in maritime war in the present case? . . .
regard Great Britain as a friend. Her Majesty's flag,
rding to our traditional principles, covers enemy's
ds not contraband of war. Goods of her Majesty's sub-
s, not contraband of war, are exempt from confiscation,
gh found under a neutral or disloyal flag. No depre-
ons shall be committed by our naval forces or by those
ny of our citizens, so far as we can prevent it, upon the
els or property of British subjects. Our blockade, be-
effective, must be respected."[1]

Here was the full assent of the United States, for the
ent war, to all except the first article of the dec-
tion of Paris. It was gracefully given at last, and
ust have been welcomed. Such an announcement,
mpanied by the statement that Seward withdrew
m the subject carrying away no feelings of passion,
udice, or jealousy," and a discreet reminder of the
that in 1838 the United States passed a law to
ent their citizens from interfering with the Canadian
llion, must have gone far toward allaying the ill-
ngs that had been aroused.

should not be inferred from what has been said of
ard that Russell and Thouvenel were altogether art-
and frank. The commercial interests of their nations
e greatly affected by our struggle, and their constant
was to find out how far these interests could be pro-
d or benefited without getting into more serious

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 143.

complications. They seemed to have but little sen
mental sympathy for either the North or the Sout
They hoped, but never felt quite confident, that t
agreement of France and Great Britain to act togeth
would work much like an offensive and defensive al
ance, by making their respective disputes with the Un
ed States practically identical because simultaneous.

Before Seward's proposition about the declaration
Paris had been made, Thouvenel and Russell had agre
on a plan that was better for French and British i
terests than the approval of all four articles of t
declaration by both belligerents.[1] If the United Stat
and the Confederacy could be induced to adopt t
second and third articles—that a neutral flag protec
an enemy's goods, and that the goods of a neutral a
not subject to seizure even in an enemy's ship—contr
band of war excepted in both cases—then the commer
of France and of Great Britain would be free fro
everything except slight annoyances. If Confedera
privateers should roam the ocean and seize the shi
and goods of citizens of the North, all the better f
other commercial nations; for it would soon cause t
commerce of the United States to be carried on und
foreign flags, especially the British and the Frenc
The rule of international law about blockades was
positive that no special approval of that article w
necessary. This was the first important plan that t
two powers tried to carry out by means of impressi
joint action.

The parties to the declaration of Paris agreed th
it could be accepted only as a whole, and that the
ceding nations should enter into no subsequent arrang
ment on maritime law in time of war without stipulati
for a strict adherence to the four articles. In direct v

[1] 55 *State Papers*, 547–50.

ion of this pledge, Great Britain and France pursued
ir project, as these instructions from Russell to Lyons
w: "Her Majesty's government expect that these
posals will be received by the United States govern-
nt in a friendly spirit. If such shall be the case, you
l endeavor to come to an agreement on the subject,
ding France, Great Britain, and the United States."[1]
t has been noticed[2] how Seward outwitted Lyons
l Mercier when they called to submit this proposition.
e communications with the Confederacy were less
appointing. Under date of July 5, 1861, Lord Lyons
uested the British consul at Charleston, South Caro-
, to get the Confederate government to consent
the observance of the two articles about the rights
neutrals. Lyons specially cautioned Consul Bunch
inst taking any action that might seem to raise the
stion of the recognition of the Confederacy by Great
tain, and he advised him neither to go to Richmond
to deal directly "with the central authority which
established there." He suggested that by explain-
the matter verbally to Governor Pickens, the latter
ght be able to obtain from the Confederate govern-
nt both an official recognition of the rights secured
neutrals by the two articles and an admission of re-
nsibility for its privateers. Lyons also informed
ch that similar instructions had been sent by the
nch government to its representative there, and
t the two consuls were expected to act in "strict
cert."[3]

s Governor Pickens was absent from Charleston, the
suls secured the services of William Henry Trescot,
was an experienced diplomatist. The whole scheme
unfolded to him, and he set out for Richmond to

[1] 55 *State Papers*, 554. [2] See *ante*, p. 180 ff.
[3] Bernard's *Neutrality of Great Britain, etc.*, 181, 182.

interview the Confederate President. Davis was me at Gordonsville, returning from the first battle of Bu Run. As soon as Davis understood the proposition, h inquired why it had not come through his accredi ed commissioners. This was partially answered by r minding him that Yancey, Rost, and Mann had not ye been officially received, and that Seward had declare that in case they should be, the United States woul regard it as a *casus belli*. The agent advised that th best way to bring about their reception would be fo the President to let it be informally known that th proposal had been received with favor, and to say tha the commissioners would give the official answer. I was suggested that this would probably lead to recogn tion; and if Seward's threat was meant, Great Britai and France would be brought into the war as the allie of the Confederacy. Davis's dissatisfaction with th way the negotiations had been opened seemed to clou his perception of the possible advantage. But he ma have thought that any attempt to go beyond the cours suggested by the representatives of Great Britain and F France would react against the Confederacy. So h merely gave his general approval, and promised to refe the question to Congress.[1] On August 13th the Co federate Congress passed a series of resolutions appro ing all the articles of the declaration of Paris excep the one referring to privateers. The "right of priva teering" was especially emphasized.

The British consul rightly considered that the wishe of her Majesty's government had been "fully met" for the abolition of privateering had not been requeste Bunch described privateering as "the arm upon whic they [the Confederates] most rely for the injury of th

[1] This paragraph is based on Bunch's report (Bernard, 182–84) a the statements of Mr. Trescot to the author.

ended commerce of their enemy." In any case, special interests of France and Great Britain were lded by the approval of the second and third articles. vard the close of his despatch Consul Bunch spoke the accession of the Confederate States to the dec- tion of Paris," and added: "The negotiation[1] hav- thus been brought to a close, the President expressed Mr. ——— [Trescot] his hope that the existence of se extended relations of commercial intercourse which rendered the application now made to him by the ernments of France and England a necessity in the v of those nations, would materially contribute to en a formal recognition of the new Confederacy. . . ." s was certainly not the language one would expect to r from the representative of a neutral power which repeatedly declared its intention merely to recog- a state of war. Nor is it likely that any officer in diplomatic service would have employed such in- ious expressions, whatever the real position of his ernment. Bunch was merely a consul, and his van- seems to have been highly excited by the unusual given him. Later it appeared that he had ex- sed himself much more strongly.

eward learned by chance of the doings of Consul ch. Early in August, 1861, he was informed by graph that one Robert Mure, of Charleston, was to sail from New York for England as bearer of atches from the Confederate government to the ish Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Mure arrested, and in his possession were found papers cating that Consul Bunch had been carrying on ething like diplomatic negotiations with the Con- racy. One showed that he had declared that the step toward recognition had been taken. Seward

[1] Lyons used the same word in his despatch to Bunch.

reviewed the case, and instructed Adams to request th
Bunch should be removed.[1]

In reply to the charges, Earl Russell[2] said that Bun
had been directed to express to the authorities of the s
called Confederacy the desire of England and Fran
that the second, third, and fourth articles of the declar
tion of Paris should be observed; that he had acted
instructions, and therefore could not be dismissed. Ru
sell disclaimed all responsibility for the assertion th
the first step to the recognition of the southern stat
by Great Britain had been taken; her Majesty's go
ernment had not recognized, and was not prepared
recognize, the so-called Confederate States as a separa
independent state.[3]

Seward replied on October 23d that there was a la
of the United States that forbade any person not sp
cially appointed or duly recognized by the Preside
from taking part in any political correspondence wi
the government of any foreign state whatever, with
intent to influence the measures of a foreign gover
ment. Moreover, the proper persons to represent t
interests of Great Britain were the diplomatic agent
nor could the United States government permit
officer exercising consular privileges by its consent
hold communications with the insurgents. Russell h
implied that because Great Britain had recognized t
Confederates as belligerents, she might properly tre
with them in regard to the rights of neutrals. As f
as Seward's attitude was concerned, this was like und
taking to strengthen a disputed claim by increasing
scope and significance; it made a denial all the mo
urgent. Seward boldly reasserted his determination

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 131–33.

[2] He had recently become an earl; but, because he preferred it,
continued to be called by his former title.

[3] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 156, 157.

intain his position toward the Confederates and not permit Great Britain to free herself from any of her igations to the United States. "Still adhering to this sition, the government of the United States will con- ue to pursue, as it has heretofore done, the counsels prudence, and will not suffer itself to be disturbed by citement. It must revoke the exequatur of the con- , who has not only been the bearer of communica- ns between the insurgents and a foreign government, violation of our laws, but has abused equally the con- ence of the two governments by reporting, without authority of his government, and in violation of ir own policy as well as of our national rights, that proceeding in which he was engaged was in the ure of a treaty with the insurgents, and the first step ards a recognition by Great Britain of their sover- nty."[1]

He made his victory more complete and less irri- ng by paying a compliment to Lord Lyons because had "carefully respected the sovereignty and the hts of the United States," and by saying that the sular privileges that had been taken from Bunch uld be "cheerfully allowed to any successor whom Majesty may appoint, against whom no grave per- al objections shall exist." Adams, with perfect tact,

[1] "Secondly, the communication of the British and French gov- ments to the insurgent cabal at Richmond through Mr. Bunch was oceeding that could not fail to alarm the American government people. When the fact happened to become known to us, I had become satisfied, though in confidential communications, that the sh government was prepared to assume a tone that should repel prevailing presumption of its inclinations to a recognition. But offensive correspondence of the British government left us no native but to exercise our right to revoke the exequatur of the ding consul. It was done, however, on the grounds of his having ered himself personally obnoxious."—Seward to Adams, Novem- 0, 1861. MS.

communicated these sentiments to Russell. Russell r
garded Adams's assertion, that the only authority i
the United States to which any diplomatic communic
tion whatever might be made was the government
the United States, as open to serious objection both o
questions of law and of fact. He considered it unre
sonable either to address the United States concernin
some grievance in New Orleans or Galveston (which
was not within the power of the United States gover
ment to correct) or to submit to any serious hardshi
actual or apprehended, without attempting to have th
Confederacy redress or avert it.[1]

Adams warded off the blows with skill. If Russell
argument in regard to Great Britain's grievances again
the Confederacy was one *ad hoc*, it must have mea
that he thought the same diplomatic agent should b
accredited to the United States and to the authoriti
organized for their overthrow. No self-respectin
nation could admit such a practice. It was entirel
true, as Russell suggested, that cases might arise i
New Orleans and elsewhere which the United Stat
government could not remedy. But in bringing fo
ward such an argument he was taking up a two-edge
sword. There are many injuries suffered by a nation
subjects in a foreign country which can only be correcte
or compensated for after long periods of delay. Wit
fine sarcasm and perfect diplomacy Adams remarke
that he supposed it was Great Britain's desire to prote
her interests in regions where the authority of the Unite
States was suspended that had induced her to relea
the United States "from responsibility for such reclam
tions by adopting the policy of granting to the insu
gents the rights of a belligerent."

When Seward announced the purpose of the Unite

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 7-9.

tes to withdraw the exequatur of Consul Bunch, t might well have been regarded as the end of the pute, unless Great Britain intended to engage in ilar negotiations in the future. Russell suggested t this might be necessary. But if it became so, the tish representatives were careful to preserve perfect recy.

On May 20, 1861, the Secretary of State informed the ssian Minister, Edward de Stoeckl, that the official s of Edward W. Barnwell, the acting Russian consul Charleston, would no longer be recognized, as he had ed the military forces in an insurrection against the ited States.[1] In the instructions of the next day to ams, Seward said that this method would be strictly owed in the future.[2] But the exequatur of Bunch's nch colleague was not revoked. The presumption hat after Seward had refused to recognize the joint on of the two powers, he thought it important not give them a common grievance.

The whole incident was well suited to impress Great tain and France with the idea that, whatever Seward's er qualities might be, he could not be frightened by eign combinations. If there had been a suspicion t he would accept any serious interference rather n make good his threat about war, it waned thence- h. In fact, the belief was spreading in Europe that was counting on a foreign war as part of a plan of ory and reunion.

[1] Chief Clerk Michael to author, August 16, 1899.

[2] See *ante*, p. 170.

CHAPTER XXXII

"KING COTTON," THE BLOCKADE, AND THE EUROPEAN I CLINATION TO INTERFERE, 1861

Perhaps no great revolution was ever begun with suc convenient and soothing theories as those that were e pounded and believed at the time of the organization the Confederacy: Probably there would be no war all; but if there should be one, northern sympathize with the South would make it easy for the Confederat to drive back the United States forces, if perchance the should venture upon southern soil. In any case, host ities could not last long, for France and Great Brita must have what the Confederacy alone could suppl and therefore they could be forced to aid the South, a condition precedent to relief from the terrible distre that was sure to follow a blockade. Of course the theories were employed to prevent the people from pe ceiving that the hazards of secession were more dange ous than any demonstrations the Republican administ tion might make against slavery. Because the prophe overlooked the possibility—soon to be a fact—that t Confederacy might at first be without a single ship war, it did not occur to them that cotton, althou "King," might be a suppliant monarch.

There were three distinct means by which the Unit States undertook to conquer the Confederacy: by mi tary and naval operations, aimed directly at its accum lated resources; by a blockade of southern ports, so to cut off the exchange of its money and superfluo

ducts for articles and materials important to the ecution of the war and to the comfort of the people; by keeping foreign countries aloof from the contest, s to bar them from giving the Confederacy either al or material support. The military and naval feat-, as such, do not come within the scope of this nar-re; and even the blockade is important to it only in nection with the diplomatic questions to which it rise. It was early recognized that to ward off for- intervention, aid, or substantial sympathy, was the important task before the Secretary of State.

he President's proclamations of April 19th and 27th e not designed to mark the actual beginning of the kade; they were merely explicit declarations of in-ion. This was prudent, for otherwise the United es would have deserved more than the ridicule of maritime nations. Although there were about ships in the United States navy, only three were ediately available for the service of closing one dred and eighty-five harbor openings.[1] Nearly all others had been ordered to foreign stations by anan's peace-loving administration, and the re-der were either unserviceable or were already en-d in important enterprises. In such circumstances as evident that the Secretary of the Navy must be energetic and the Secretary of State very diplo-c to make the injury to the Confederacy greater the danger likely to result to the United States the attempt to shut off commerce between Con-rate ports and foreign nations; for a blockade that only partially effective would give just grounds for plaint, and would be sure to create sympathy with new government.

[1] Spear's *History of Our Navy*, 32; Soley's *The Blockade and the rs*, 26.

From the extent of British interests involved, it w
to be expected that Lord Lyons would early obtain fr
Seward an explicit statement as to the leading featu
of the forthcoming blockade. As the conversation to
place before the end of April,[1] it was too soon f
Seward to be clear and positive on all questions th
might arise; but Lyons reported that as far as t
Secretary's "assurances in general terms" went, "not
ing could be more satisfactory." Seward's expectati
was that the blockade would not be announced public
at each port, but that no vessel would be liable to seizu
that had not been individually warned. This was ve
discreet. If there should be no United States ship
serve notice, there would be no obstacle to entering t
port, and therefore no ground for complaint; on t
other hand, the presence of a United States ship wou
be an actual demonstration of an effective blockad
When it was suggested that it would be impossible
watch the entire coast beyond the Chesapeake, Sewa
replied that it would all be blockaded, and blockad
effectively. He stated that the foreign vessels in po
at the time of the beginning of the blockade would
allowed to leave with their cargoes. And, he adde
if any of the rules should seem to bear with und
severity on British ships, he would be ready to consid
any representations as to the equities of the matte
His confidence of success seems less surprising wh
we know that on the day of Lincoln's first proclam
tion of a blockade twenty steamers were ordered to
purchased and armed.[2]

G. J. Pendergrast, commander of the United Stat
home squadron, issued a proclamation at Fortress Mo
roe, Virginia, April 30th, declaring that he had a for

[1] Lyons to Russell, May 2, 1861, quoted Bernard, 228–30.
[2] 2 Seward, 559.

fficient to carry out the blockade of the Virginia and orth Carolina coasts, and that all vessels coming from listance would be warned off. Otherwise difficulty uld have arisen with the first seizure on the North rolina coast, for, as no blockaders were there, it was t actually blockaded.

By the purchase and arming of many merchant-ves- s and the recall of governmental ships from foreign rts, the actual blockade rapidly extended southward, hough at first it skipped some important ports. The ual practice was to regard the President's April proc- nations as general notices; then the announcement of commander of the ship or of the fleet appearing fore such ports as Charleston, Savannah, or Mobile rked the actual beginning of the blockade, although sels coming from a distance were not seized without warning unless there was a fair presumption against m. It was two or three months before there was ch danger, except at a few points, in attempting to the blockade. As time went on and knowledge of blockade might be assumed, the practice of individ- warning was given up, and a merchantman bound any Confederate port was liable to capture at sea, nternational law allowed.

Another feature of this blockade was the question of continuance, under certain conditions. The repudi- n of paper blockades compels the continual, but not continuous, presence of ships, so as to introduce at t a decided element of danger to blockade-runners. May, 1861, the *Niagara* began the blockade at Charles- , but after a few days she left the port unwatched. d Lyons sent a note to Seward expressing the ex- tation that if the blockade was to be begun again, it uld only be after due notification and the regular od had elapsed for the departure of neutral vessels n cargoes. Seward replied that the blockade at

Charleston had been "neither abandoned, relinquished nor remitted"; that the intention of the government was to have the *Harriet Lane* replace the *Niagara*, but she had been delayed a day or two by accident; that he did not consider the blockade impaired by a temporary absence, but that it would remain in effect until notice of its discontinuance should be given by proclamation of the President; that the purpose was to maintain it constantly and vigorously. Seward's claim was arbitrary, but Great Britain did not find it worth while to insist on the established rule that in case a blockade is voluntarily raised, fresh notice must be given should a reinvestment be decided on.[1]

The first effects of the blockade were very encouraging to the United States. The ships in southern ports that were allowed to leave with their cargoes were not many. Nearly all foreign shippers and ship-owners immediately adopted the prudent course of avoiding the Confederacy; so the supply of foreign goods was largely cut off. This was no surprise to the would-be founders of a new nation; in fact, they believed that this discontinuance in the profitable exchange of southern products for European goods would lead to a demonstration of the full power of "King Cotton." From the beginning sailing vessels and small steamers stole out through the blockade at many places. But their cargoes of cotton and tobacco were never large. In returning — if not captured—they brought in contraband of war and articles of general use, not heavy or bulky in proportion to their value. Such craft were the blockade-runners

[1] Douglas Owen's *Declaration of War*, 9; see Bernard, 237 ff., for the correspondence and comment. "When the *Niagara* arrived off Charleston on the 11th of May, she remained only four days; and, except for the fact that the *Harriet Lane* was off the bar on the 19th there was no blockade whatever at that point for a fortnight afterward."—Soley, 35; see also p. 84.

r fortunes and misfortunes were strange and thrill-
and but for their assistance the Confederacy could
ly have lived two years.

was foreseen that some of the industries of Eng-
and of France were to be greatly embarrassed by
blockade. Yet there was so general an expectation
the South could not be conquered, and that the
npt would not continue long, that many concluded
foreign aid to the Confederacy would be unneces-
even to the realization of any selfish aims. Sew-
bold warnings against interference made such
ons most expedient. The blockade had scarce-
gun when Mercier recommended that France and
t Britain should insist on having it opened for the
rtation of cotton.[1] About the same time Lord
erston, the Premier of the British Cabinet, said that
ould count the day on which he could put an end
e American war one of the happiest of his life; but
hrewd old statesman, who had no scruples against
table interference, saw that the attempt would then
to more harm than good.[2] Europe was, indeed,
out the markets and supplies of the South, but those
e North remained open and were never more valu-

If Seward's language was to be taken seriously, it
t that an attempt by one or more foreign nations
sregard the blockade would cause war and entail
s in trade with the North, perhaps without any
antial gain from commerce with the South. None
powers could figure out a profitable bargain in such
terprise. So Great Britain and France continued
stpone action on this question, confident that a
ve battle would soon convince the United States
the Confederacy was invincible. Then European

[1] 2 Walpole's *Russell*, 344; 2 Ashley's *Palmerston*, 210.
[2] Ashley's *Palmerston*, 208.

intervention, it was expected, would mean peace—r war, as Seward had proclaimed.

When the news of the Confederate victory at B Run, July 21, 1861, reached London, early in Augu the commissioners hastened to request an informal terview with Earl Russell; but he cruelly asked them put their communication in writing. About this ti they reported that they had "not received the le notice or attention, official or social, from any mem of the government," and that they differed among the selves as to whether they should press for a definite swer on the question of recognition.[1] In the formal p made to Russell, a few days later, they informed h that there was an average crop of cotton which wo be delivered on the wharves "when there shall b prospect of the blockade being raised, and not befor The blockade had often been broken at several poi they said. It was for the neutral powers, whose co merce had been so seriously damaged, to determine h long such a blockade should last.[2] But Russell c tinued to show no signs of great concern.

Optimism was so great a factor in Seward's diploma that it is difficult to distinguish when his cheerful a confident expressions represented his real opinions a when they were announced merely to encourage oth Shortly before the battle of Bull Run he wrote to Ada that the "possibility of foreign intervention, sooner later, in this domestic disturbance is never absent fr the thoughts of this government."[3] He must h

[1] Commissioners' despatch of August 7th.

[2] British *Parliamentary Papers*, 1862, *North America No. 1*, 63-6

[3] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 117. This despatch bore the date of July 21, 1 which was Sunday and the day of the battle. The character of greater part of it, and Mr. F. W. Seward's account of what the Se tary did that day (2 Seward, 598), indicate that all but the last p graph was drafted before the 21st.

d intervention after that battle; but instead of ing any serious apprehensions, he rejoiced that the at would call forth increased resources and com- careful reorganization of the army.[1] In an unpub- d despatch of September 5th, he informed Dayton:

am not reposing in the expectation of disinterested athy or favor towards our cause, in any foreign coun- but I feel it to be necessary that we should obtain time ne complete organization of the powers of the govern- before suffering the possible foreign complications of positions to take effect. That assumption is now suffi- to repose upon. I feel assured that foreign nations from this time forward hesitate more and more about ing a policy that shall be hostile to this Union. We have returning friendship just in the degree that we be able to show that we do not need it."

r in the same month he wrote home saying that his of intervention were subsiding, for "the prestige cession is evidently wearing off in Europe."[2] He likely to speak of the best and to prepare for the t. Undoubtedly he was bearing in mind Adams's e that the English supply of cotton would last un- e middle of September, and that there was no dan- f a change of policy in the mean time, but that it uncertain whether there would subsequently be an ipt to break the blockade.[3] He certainly knew the two greatest European powers were only wait- or a good opportunity to get cotton without taking r with it.

though not especially significant, Confederate ries during the summer and early in September gthened the belief of the Confederates that Great in and France would soon be impressed by their ary power. They also considered the beginning of

p. Cor., 1861, 123, 236.

[2] 2 Seward, 621.

[3] July 12, 1861. MS.

the scarcity of cotton in France and England as v favorable to European interference. Before the end August it was decided to "disunite" the diploma trio, and to send James M. Mason and John Slidell commissioners to Great Britain and to France, resp tively. Both ranked high among the Confeder leaders, and while in the United States Senate they h much to do with the foreign policies of Pierce and Buchanan. Mason was a distinguished member o distinguished Virginia family, and Southerners belie that he would be more than a match for Adams; wh Slidell, like Rost and Soulé, was intimately associa with the creole aristocracy of Louisiana, who felt m at home in Paris than in New York city.

Seward had said that the United States were not turbed by a British order sending three regiments Canada and some armed vessels into American wat Nevertheless, it was wise for him to find a new way let Europe know that our measures for defence could greatly increased. So, on October 14, 1861, he addres a circular letter to the governors of the states either the seaboard or on the Great Lakes, asking them to br to the consideration of their respective legislatures question of perfecting their military defences. It suggested that if the states should undertake this wo Congress would undoubtedly provide for their re bursement. The reason he gave for the request that agents of the Confederacy had tried to inv European intervention, and, taking advantage of embarrassments of agriculture, manufactures, and c merce in foreign countries, resulting from the insur tion they had inaugurated at home, they sought to volve our common country in controversies with pow with whom we ought to maintain peaceful relati The prospect of any such disturbance was then, he s less serious than it had been at any previous period

rouble. Nevertheless, it was necessary "to take precaution that is possible to avert the evils of gn war."[1]

ward's circular had hardly been sent out when the tions became more favorable to foreign interfer- On the 15th of October it was reported that n and Slidell had started on their mission.[2] In the swift little *Theodora* had escaped with them Charleston, unseen by the blockading fleet, which ed to be sleeping in the darkness of the early ing of October 12th. Rumor said that they had in the *Nashville*, and would be borne direct to pe; and, of course, their escape would be good evi- of the ineffectiveness of the blockade. In the of intercepting them, Commander J. B. Marchand, the *James Adger*, the fastest warship available, was ed out from New York, and hastened to the neigh- od of the entrance to the English Channel, expect- catch the *Nashville*, whether bound for England r France. Then, on October 21st, came the disas- t Ball's Bluff. Although it was a comparatively engagement, the mismanagement and destruction e Union forces greatly helped to increase the pres- f the Confederates.

ring this month, too, when Seward was in the of the somewhat dangerous correspondence with Britain about Consul Bunch's performances and the sonment of British subjects, signs of dire ill-omen from France. A deficient harvest and the scarcity ton were beginning to cause such fear of approach- istress that from the chambers of commerce and manufacturing and business centres there arose ons and cries for relief—relief by supplying its ies with cotton, the raw material without which,

[1] 3 Moore's *Rebellion Record*, Docs., p. 193.
[2] 1 *Naval Records*, 113.

it was claimed, hundreds of thousands of persons wo
soon be unable to earn the barest necessities of life.

The outlook was so serious that Thouvenel sent
Mercier some instructions to be laid before Sewa
which indicated that the French government was on t
verge of demanding that the blockade should at le
be made less severe. Thouvenel's leading ideas, as
viewed by Seward in an unpublished despatch of Oc
ber 30, 1861, to Dayton, may be summarized as follo
European nations suffered more from the interrupti
of their commercial intercourse with the United Sta
than with any other country. The blockade had pa
lyzed French commerce with the Confederate Stat
France would, nevertheless, wait patiently if the prol
gation of the war were not likely to produce new a
grave perils. Cotton had been so extensively used t
nothing could be substituted for it. France annua
consumed enough for the manufacture of tissues wo
nearly one hundred and fifty million dollars. T
hundred thousand bales of this cotton came from
United States. If the supplies should fail, many
Alsace and in Normandy would be in danger of star
tion. Complaints had already begun to come in fr
the commercial cities, and if it should be impossible
make new purchases, the people would address th
selves to the government for relief. Thouvenel inqui
if the time had not arrived to consider future dang
and avert them while there still remained freedom
action. He had expected that the United States wo
make some concessions to lessen Europe's embarr
ments from the scarcity of cotton. France, at le
was no longer able to postpone an examination of
question. He then asked — which was the signific
point — the United States to modify the blockade s
to allow foreign consumers to secure supplies of cot
He thought that such an arrangement would not h

unfavorable effect upon the United States, but would forth the good-will of other nations.

houvenel's expressions were diplomatic and not idedly unfriendly, but there was a suggestion of a eat in the problem presented, which was likely to te alarm. France had no right in international law lemand American cotton for her factories, but in the of popular distress and outcries for relief, every ernment is prone to resort to arbitrary measures. ard did not know to what extent the agreement veen Great Britain and France to act jointly might arried. The rumors prevalent a few months before ut intervention in Mexico were now confirmed. Such nterprise would naturally draw Napoleon closer to Confederacy, and open a wide field for intrigues. this warning about the scarcity of a very impor- raw material merely statesmanlike foresight, or it an introduction to something else?

eward, in replying, affected to regard Thouvenel's estions as a candid statement of real but unfounded ehensions. The President was represented as still ng the question under consideration; so Seward's atch, addressed to Dayton, was largely tentative:

I do not altogether agree with Mr. Thouvenel in regard e imminence or even the seriousness of the evils which pprehends in France. The very vigor of modern com- e which makes the shocks which result from its occa- l interruption so painful, enables it to seek out relief itigation in a speedy change of its movements. My rvation, moreover, would lead me to believe that what nanufacturing interest of France is likely to need most soonest is supplies, not of material, but of provisions, that the customary purchases of cotton would be un- ing for the relief of her people without a restoration e market for her cotton, silken, and fancy fabrics and vines, which notoriously have heretofore been found e more northern and western of our states, and which war has temporarily closed." . . .

Then, in a careful statement of the general nature the commerce between the United States and Fran and Great Britain—such a statement as one would e pect a tariff-for-revenue-only Democrat to make—he co tinued:

"There are three leading commercial nations on t earth—namely, the United States, France, and Great Br ain. The two last, with less range of production, have t advantage of greater capital and mechanical skill and lab The former, with a new and unexhausted continent for home, excels in bread and in materials for manufactu The United States consume European fabrics and lu uries, and France and Great Britain naturally rely up us for provisions and vegetable and mineral productio needed in manufacture. Virtually the three natio though politically divided, constitute only one great ciety or commonwealth. The wheels of industry in ea country move with a certain dependence on the cor sponding wheels which are kept in operation in the oth countries, and, all moving together, they work out a co mon prosperity for all of them. Civil war in either cou try, in just the extent that it is flagrant and obstina suspends the wheels which it finds in motion there, a consequently disturbs and retards the accustomed ope tions of industry in the other two countries."

. . . "The Union made the commerce whose obstr tion France deplores. Let the Union fall, then not o will that obstruction continue, but with it the highly p fected and thoroughly adapted systems of production, change, and consumption, which hitherto have existed all three of the countries, will disappear forever."

. . . "We have adopted, as necessity required, the leg mate means to save the Union, regardless of remonstran from any quarter, and we have adopted no other."

In answer to the request for a relaxation of the blo ade, Seward said that it was the desire of the gove ment in restoring the Union to use the least harm means; but to comply with Thouvenel's suggesti would give all the gain to others, and leave to the Uni States all the losses and hazards. No mention had b

made as to how much cotton was desired, or of what would be given in exchange for it. Nor had it been explained how a mitigation of the blockade could be made compatible with Federal sovereignty. Moreover, there had been no statement of the advantages that might be expected to accrue to the United States. It had, indeed, been said that allowing France to have cotton would prevent an accumulation of difficulties. "Our respect for France forbids us from supposing that Mr. Thouvenel is to be understood as implying that she will adopt any injurious or hostile policy, whether in arms or without, if we should refuse to yield a concession, which, although desirable for her own welfare, is, nevertheless, solicited as a favor and not claimed as a right." Lest this might be mistaken for timidity or obtuseness, he warned France that although the United States had not been ambitious for the isolation of this continent, they were not insensible that they had resources sufficient to enable them to rise above the necessity of maintaining existing relations with the old world. Europe had planted slavery here, he said, and we were waiting for its extirpation. "But when European nations shall think of intervening to maintain it here for their own advantage and to the subversion of our own government, they will, I am sure, calculate not only the cost but the probabilities of success in an enterprise which the conscience of the civilized world would forever reprobate and condemn. We do not expect any such proceeding on the part of France."

Turning from "this unpleasant phase of the subject to intimations of more agreeable import," Seward suggested that Thouvenel had neglected to mention the form and extent in which the good-will, of which he had spoken, might be expected to come, and that he had not indicated "the grateful states by which it is to be exer-

cised." This showed that no complete proposition h
yet been made. Then in a few sentences he put up
France the responsibility for the delay, and he made
easy for her to show if her purposes were friendly:

"Heretofore France has advised us that she was acti
upon agreement with Great Britain in all that concerns c
affairs. We are not informed whether hereafter that pow
is to act towards us in an improved spirit, while the con
dence imposed upon me by Mr. Thouvenel does not ev
allow me to seek any explanation on the subject from Gre
Britain herself.

"It is left equally obscure with whom the combinati
can be formed by us, or what is the nature of the combi
tion itself which it is suggested the President can ma
with a view to disperse the difficulties with which our po
tion is, in the judgment of Mr. Thouvenel, surrounded.

"I am sure that Mr. Thouvenel will admit that these
flections are natural and just. They suggest these inquiri
First, if we should relax our blockade, as Mr. Thouve
proposes, will France thereafter maintain an attitude
cold indifference to our exertions for the preservation
the American Union, with its inestimable blessings, or w
she regard the struggle as one virtuous in its nature, no
in its object, and needful to the best interests of mankin
If France should so regard it, to what extent would s
exert her own great influence to cause it to be so regard
by other nations? If we make the concession required
us, are we still to be held to the strict law of maintainin
blockade with adequate force at every port on our sea-co
of three thousand miles, or shall we be challenged when
proceed to close the ports usurped by our own disloyal ci
zens, without provoking the intervention of the part
whom we shall have sacrificed so much to favor thus in
season of distress? Shall pirates preying upon our co
merce be sheltered, supplied, and armed in the ports of t
nations to whom we have opened, at our own cost, a tra
from which by the law of nations they had been rightfu
excluded?"

Dayton was instructed to ask confidentially for
formation on these points. Seward did not believe th
the struggle would be as protracted as Thouvenel s

posed, and he felt confident that the United States would "be in free possession of some or all of those ports" "long before France or any other nation shall be brought to such distress as he apprehends." Then "our own commerce and that of the world" would be restored to their former flourishing condition.

This was one of Seward's great despatches; perhaps it was the greatest, if we consider his perfect balance and the diplomatic way in which he seemed to ignore what was menacing, while he adroitly let Thouvenel see what the result would be if the implied threats should be carried out. Like the man in the proverb who went out for wool and came back shorn, Thouvenel, instead of receiving such a response as he had sought, found himself confronted with a request for a careful exposition of the attitude France would assume under certain conditions; and this request had been made with such perfect skill that the great Frenchman had to comply with it or change the current of his inquiries. Either course would be a decided gain to the United States. Although Seward wrote at a time when he was in the midst of "intense anxiety and severe labor," and thought it doubtful whether the government could escape the yet deeper and darker abyss of foreign war,[1] the despatch showed no signs of impatience or irritability.

[1] A letter to Mrs. Seward, written on the next day, shows that Seward's temperament had not changed, but he had learned to exercise more self-control in his official communications:

"The pressure of interests and ambitions in Europe, which disunionists have procured to operate on the Cabinets of London and Paris, have made it doubtful whether we can escape the yet deeper and darker abyss of foreign war. The responsibility resting upon me is overwhelming. My associates, of course, can differ with me about what I ought to do and say, but not advise me what to do and say. I have worried through, and finished my despatches. They must go for good or evil. I have done my best. I thought that my health would fail, but now I am well and cheerful, and hopeful as ever."—2 Seward, 627.

"King Cotton" had not yet justified the expectatio
formed of him, but there was still an apparently su
stantial basis for confidence in his power. In a messa
of November 18, 1861, Jefferson Davis warned Euro
over the shoulders of the Confederate Congress, that
was "plain that a long continuance of this blocka
might, by a diversion of labor and investment of capi
in other employments, so diminish the supply as to bri
ruin upon all those interests of foreign countries whi
are dependent on that staple"; and it remained to
seen, he said, how far the war might "work a revoluti
in the industrial system of the world."

Of course Seward could not know either the amou
of distress that would be caused on account of the la
of cotton, or the political considerations that might
duce France or Great Britain, or both of them, to int
fere. As a matter of fact, Palmerston and Russell thoug
it still too soon to act, although France would have be
ready to join in serving notice on the belligerents th
they must make up their quarrels or count the two gr
powers as their enemies. If the policy was to be chang
Russell believed that it should be done on a grand sca
All interested parties looked forward with hope or f
to the meeting of the British and the French Par
ments early in 1862, when, it was thought, some defin
policy would be adopted. The strength of Sewar
diplomacy so far had been in its fearlessness, not in a
ability to win European sympathy for the North. I
he now realized the importance of trying to influe
the two great governments by bringing the press a
the clergy, and then the people, to a correct understa
ing of the causes and purposes of the Civil War. T
intention seems to have taken a definite shape in his m
in October, 1861.

[1] 2 Walpole's *Russell*, 344; 2 Ashley's *Palmerston*, 28.

The original plan was to send Edward Everett, J. P. Kennedy, Archbishop Hughes, and Bishop McIlvaine to Europe. Subsequently Robert C. Winthrop was also invited.[1] But of the five only the two ecclesiastics found it practicable to accept; and the Archbishop even made his acceptance conditional on having Thurlow Weed for a colleague. Seward was afraid of the criticism that might be occasioned by Weed's appointment, for most of the strong antislavery men had not forgiven Weed for favoring compromise the previous winter. Finally, Seward's fears were so far overcome as to allow Weed to go abroad "as a volunteer," while the expenses of the others were to be paid by the government.[2] It was believed that Weed could correct many of the erroneous impressions in the minds of French and English journalists and public men, and also undo some of the work of the Confederate press-agents. Bishop McIlvaine, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, was expected to develop among English clergymen a sentiment against the Confederacy, the corner-stone of which was slavery. Archbishop Hughes bore Seward's important reply to Thouvenel, and it was hoped that his distinguished rank would help him to win for the North the sympathy of Napoleon, of the Pope, and of other Catholics high in church and state. General Scott, who had retired from the army and was going abroad for his health, had in vain coveted a semi-diplomatic position.[3] All set out early in November. Scott and Weed sailed together; and it was odd that they should narrowly escape capture by the *Nashville*,[4] which was supposed to have Mason and Slidell aboard. But, in fact, these Confederates were then sailing northward in a United States warship. And an incident had occurred that

[1] Winthrop to Seward, November 12th. Seward MSS.
[2] 1 *Weed*, 634–38; 3 Seward, 17–19.
[3] 3 Seward, 20.
[4] 3 Seward, 20.

was to change the point of immediate danger fro
Paris to London and to make the all-important que
tion not one about cotton and European interferen
in America, but of American interference with neutr
rights.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE *TRENT* AFFAIR

A few days after Mason and Slidell escaped from Charleston, the *Theodora* landed them at Cardenas, Cuba, whence they leisurely proceeded to Havana, to take the *Trent*, a British packet running between Vera Cruz and St. Thomas. Captain Wilkes, in the *San Jacinto*, was on the southern coast of Cuba, when he heard of the *Theodora* and her important passengers. He hastened to Havana, hoping to capture the little blockade-runner; but being too late, he concluded to try to catch the diplomatists elsewhere. He was lying in wait in the Bahama Channel, November 8th, when the *Trent* came along. A shot and then a shell fired across her bow halted her. Wilkes sent an officer and an armed guard aboard. Her captain refused to show the ship's papers or the passenger-list; but Mason and Slidell and their two secretaries were recognized and forcibly removed to the *San Jacinto*, notwithstanding the angry protests of the officers of the British ship. The *Trent* was then permitted to continue on her course. From St. Thomas many of the passengers and at least one of the officers went direct to London and spread the news of the exciting incident. The *San Jacinto* proudly bore off her prize to the United States, and in a few days the would-be envoys extraordinary at the Courts of the Tuileries and of St. James were prisoners in Fort Warren, near Boston. But their surprise was as nothing compared with the

state of public feeling in the United States and in Gr
Britain.

A few days before the news of the *Trent* af
reached London, Captain Marchand appeared in E
lish waters with the *James Adger*, and coaled and t
on supplies at Southampton. As it was known by t
time that Mason and Slidell were going to Europe
the West Indies, it was assumed that Marchand's
structions were to seize the Confederate emissaries
in a British merchantman. Before Adams had had
opportunity to explain to Palmerston that Marcha
was looking for the *Nashville*—to the capture of wh
Great Britain could have taken no exception—a Brit
warship was sent out to prevent Marchand from in
fering with neutral rights; and the newspapers and
government were expecting something sensational n
home.[1] The erroneous inference about Marchand's
structions was not corrected outside of a small cir
therefore, when Wilkes's exploit was reported it
widely assumed that he had acted on orders. Engl
was soon ablaze with indignation at the alleged in
to British sovereignty. Interest, prejudice, and poli
worked together. Many persons endeavored to use
affair so as to help forward the plan of breaking
blockade and recognizing the Confederacy. "The wh
feeling of the people," one of Seward's English frie
wrote, "has undergone a change. Sympathy was but c
ly expressed for the South. Now it is warm and uni
sal."[2] The newspapers, led by the London *Times*, u
the most violent language toward the United States,
were extremely bitter against Seward. It was char
and widely believed that an affront had been intended
a war sought. Seward's earlier declarations about C
ada and his letter to the governors of the states borde

[1] 115 *War Records*, 1078, 1104.
[2] Charles Mackay, 115 *War Records*, 1107.

on the Great Lakes or the Atlantic were understood to mean that he desired a war for the purpose of annexing Canada. It was especially unfortunate that such liberal-minded and devoted allies of the North as Bright, Cobden, the Duke of Argyll, the Duchess of Sutherland, and others regarded Seward as unfriendly to Great Britain.[1]

The recounting of two incidents that had occurred within a year greatly prejudiced the minds of the British Cabinet against him. In April, 1861, it was rumored that the Confederates had purchased the *Peerless*, a ship lying at Toronto, to be used as a commerce-destroyer, and that she was to go down the St. Lawrence under the British flag and be delivered to them at sea. Seward demanded that Lord Lyons should take immediate action to prevent this, but the British Minister explained that his relation to Canada made compliance impossible. Seward then declared that he would have the ship seized by our naval forces, and without informing the British government he despatched George Ashmun to Toronto on an official mission. Lords Russell and Lyons inferred from this action that Seward thought he could overawe Great Britain. They entered their solemn protests. Ashmun was recalled as unceremoniously as he was sent; the *Peerless* did not go to the Confederates; and perhaps it was Seward's summary course that prevented it. But his first conspicuous act in foreign affairs had made an unfavorable impression.[2] The other incident was thoroughly trifling except in its effect. During the festivities when the Prince of Wales was in Albany, late in 1860, Seward chaffingly remarked to the Duke of Newcastle that he was soon to be in a position where it would be his duty to insult Great Britain, and he should proceed to do so. The Duke took the remark seriously, and as Colonial Secretary re-

[1] 4 Pierce, 30, 31; 3 Rhodes, 532, 533; 3 Seward, 30, 31.

[2] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 105, 106, 112; 2 Walpole's *Russell*, 342, 343.

ported it to his colleagues. The newspapers soon
the story forth on every breeze.

Under these influences the government and the
ple were soon ready for action. It was a time for I
Palmerston, the Prime Minister, to indulge his pas
for driving the wheel close to the precipice so a
show how dexterously he could avoid going over it
Cobden said. Lord Russell quickly drafted an emph
ultimatum, and sent it to the Queen for approval.
the benevolent Victoria was in no mood for war, for
Prince Consort was in his last illness. They scrutin
the draft and returned it with recommendations t
were wise, charitable, and designed to show that the
purpose of the demand upon the United States wa
protect the dignity and sovereignty of Great Britai

Russell adopted the suggestions, and, on Novem
30th, instructed Lord Lyons to demand that the Un
States should release the four men and make a su
ble apology. In another note of the same date he
rected that if this should not be done after a dela
seven days, the British Minister should hasten to L
don with the entire legation and its archives. Rus
seems to have concluded, by the next day, that this
too threatening a mode of procedure with a man
Seward's supposed fighting propensities. So Ly
was privately requested not to carry the despatch w
him when he first brought the matter to Sewa
attention; the President and the Secretary should
left to choose their own course, and anything
menace should be avoided. After the administra
had had time to consider the facts, then the for
despatch should be read to Seward. If the Con
erates should be liberated the British Cabinet woul
"rather easy about the apology."[1] Nevertheless, pr

[1] 2 Walpole's *Russell*, 346.

ations for war were pushed forward in all directions. As one of Palmerston's biographers has said: "In three weeks from ten thousand to eleven thousand troops were on their way across the Atlantic, and our naval force at that station was nearly doubled. The English public was certainly in a great rage."[1]

Perhaps the most significant signs of the time were the expressions of rapture on the part of Confederates in Richmond, London, and Paris alike. But this was not known in the North until a week or two later. They were confident that the *Trent* affair would involve the United States in a foreign war, turn Great Britain into an ally of the South, and soon bring victory and independence to the Confederacy. In ecstasy A. Dudley Mann congratulated R. M. T. Hunter, Toombs's successor as Confederate Secretary of State, that recognition by Great Britain was not much longer to be delayed, and added: "An hour after the Cabinet decided upon its line of action with respect to the outrage committed by the *San Jacinto*, I was furnished with full particulars. What a noble statesman is Lord Palmerston!"[2]

In the North there was a great outburst of joy over the seizure. "We do not believe the American heart ever thrilled with more genuine delight," said an editorial article in the New York *Times* of November 17th. As for Commodore Wilkes and his command, let the handsome thing be done. Consecrate another *Fourth* of July to him. Load him down with services of plate and swords of the cunningest and costliest art." Several features that were largely accidental contributed to raise the rejoicing to the highest pitch. Excepting Davis and Floyd, probably Mason and Slidell were at this time the most generally hated of all the Confeder-

[1] 2 Ritchie's *Palmerston*, 349. [2] 115 *War Records*, 1236.

ates. Mason was the author of the fugitive-slave
and was supposed to have done most to get Virgini
join the Confederacy; whereas Slidell, a Northerne
birth and education, had become one of the most effec
champions of slavery and secession. If they succee
in reaching Europe they would be strong evidence aga
the efficiency of the blockade. The supposition that t
had gone in a Confederate ship left in the minds of
people of the North only a question of the possibilit
their capture, without any thought of interfering
the rights of any neutral nation. There had been so
victories and so many disappointments that the sma
success would have been welcomed and exaggera
Wilkes's exploit was so picturesque, and it came
moment when a whole section was anxious, that it a
like touching a match to powder. Wilkes immedia
became a hero—a second and victorious Ande
Grave, learned, and experienced men in Boston
plauded his act and fêted him as soon as he came ash
The Secretary of the Navy rushed with the crowd
sent official and gushing congratulations "for the g
public service you have rendered in the capture of
rebel emissaries." When Congress met, on Decer
2d, the House could not wait to complete the rou
of its organization before passing a resolution th
ing Wilkes "for his brave, adroit, and patriotic con
in the arrest and detention of the traitors, Jame
Mason and John Slidell."[1] The rejoicing was at
an expression of national pride rather than of defi
of Great Britain, although the popular antipathy to
had become greatly embittered during the past
months. Later, when threatening signs appeare
the horizon, many men became desperate and foolh
at the prospect of having our blockade broken and

[1] *Globe*, 1861-62, 5.

cities bombarded. Reckless patriotism seemed to be all-important. The very elements of international law were quite forgotten or strangely misrepresented.

Fortunately there were some important exceptions. Charles Sumner, who was chairman of the Senate committee on foreign affairs, early and repeatedly advised the President that the seizure could not be successfully defended. On November 28th Thomas Ewing wrote to Lincoln that "we ought not to vouch as authority previous aggressive acts of England at a time when she was a swaggering bully on the ocean." If we did, Great Britain, at war ten years to our one, could "stretch the law against us to the same point." He thought the best way to treat the incident would be to let her lay down the law, and for the United States to agree to anything favorable to neutral vessels, their cargoes and passengers.[1] Lewis Cass telegraphed similar opinions to Seward, December 18th; and in a letter the following day he said that a war with Great Britain would go far toward preventing the restoration of the rebel states; he ridiculed the "laudations bestowed upon Captain Wilkes for his courage in taking three or four unarmed men out of an unarmed vessel," and added: "As for any injury which these rebel agents could do us in Europe, it is all nonsense."[2] On December 16th Robert J. Walker also very forcibly presented the political and national interests involved. Those who would unnecessarily involve the United States in a war with Great Britain were allies of the southern rebellion, he said; and the statesmen who from want of courage and firmness subjected the country to such a war would "meet the execrations of the American people and of the friends of liberty throughout the world, and will join the wretched caravan of infamy of which Buchanan is

[1] 115 *War Records*, 1103.

[2] 115 *War Records*, 1132.

at present the only leader." He believed that popular clamor would soon pass away.[1] George T nor Curtis maintained, in a Boston newspaper, t whether the capture was justifiable or not, the priso could not be held because Wilkes had voluntarily the ship go free, and thereby had made it impos to obtain the required judgment of a judicial tribu "Our countrymen have not so little intelligence o much false pride as not to be able or willing to see a principle important to the peace of the world is volved in this case." This argument was probabl Seward's hands by December 22d.[2]

From several of the most sober-minded Americ abroad came some very significant comments. Ada whose wisdom increased with the emergency, stro advised, on December 3d, against approving Wilk act, "unless we are ready also to assume their [G Britain's] old arrogant claim of the dominion of seas. Our neutral rights are as valuable to us as they were, whilst time has reflected nothing but cr on our steady defence of them against superior powe Three days later he wrote again to Seward: "Minis and people now fully believe it is the *intention* of government to drive them into hostilities. . . . present expectation is that by the middle of Janu at furthest, diplomatic relations will have been sund between the two countries, without any act of min A passage in an unpublished despatch that Dayton from Paris, December 3d, was still more discomfitin

"It is very evident, however, that upon *this questio* will have scarcely a friend among the press or public in Europe. The impression here, as in England, is get to be general that *we are a power reckless of the obligat of international law.* . . . I have been asked by intelli

[1] 115 *War Records*, 1127–29.
[2] 115 *War Records*, 1137–39.
[3] 115 *War Records*, 1116.
[4] 115 *War Records*, 1119, 11

gentlemen here why it was that *you* seemed so determined 'to pick a quarrel' with England. It was vain to answer that no such determination did or could exist; that under present circumstances it would be an act of folly, little short of madness; they would not believe me. . . . Still I cannot but feel that, right or wrong, this seizure of the Confederate commissioners on board a British ship has come at a most inopportune moment."

Thouvenel informed Dayton about this time that, in case of war, the moral force of French opinion would be against the United States, and that all the maritime powers with whom he had conferred agreed that Wilkes had violated international law.[1] On December 5th John Bigelow wrote to Seward that the *Trent* affair was "universally regarded here [in Paris] by the press, the people, and the government, as a rude assault upon the dignity of a neutral nation."[2] He also prepared a letter expressing the belief that the United States would surrender the Confederates if Great Britain should adopt the liberal policy long favored by our government. Weed had it signed by General Scott, then in Paris.[3] This so-called Scott letter was published there as early as December 4th.[4] It was quoted throughout Europe, and appeared in the New York *Times* of December 19th. Weed's reports and opinions sent to Seward were very positive in opposition to approving Wilkes's act, and must have had much weight.[5]

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 307.

[2] Seward MSS.

[3] 1 *Weed*, 655, 656.

[4] 3 Seward, 27, 28.

[5] Here are a few sentences:—December 2d: "I saw a letter from a high source from London, in which it is again said that you want to provoke a war with England for the purpose of getting Canada. . . . . You are in a 'tight place,' and I pray that you may be imbued with the wisdom the emergency requires. *This is* true." December 4th: "Systematic agencies and efforts must have been employed to poison both the English government and people against you. It crops out in the London journals through all their articles. . . . All around they [your friends] found people fortified with evidences of your hostility to England." December 6th: "What I mentioned yesterday about

But what were Seward's acts and thoughts duri
the five weeks between the time of learning of the in
dent and of being informed of Great Britain's attitud
Several years afterward Gideon Welles stated that at fi
"no man was more elated and jubilant over the captu
of the emissaries than Mr. Seward."[1] This is not impr
able; were it otherwise Seward would have been a ra
exception. Postmaster-General Blair, alone of all t
members of the Cabinet, is known to have immediate
judged the affair correctly.[2] Seward's habits and asso
ations were most likely to lead him to regard the pr
able political results as being of prime considerati
Whatever may have been his first impulses or priva
opinion, he was certainly non-committal so far as t
public knew. Three facts of importance are now know
that he believed France, and perhaps Great Britain,
be on the verge of intervention of some sort; that
had so earnestly deprecated European interference, a
the war sure to follow, as to send abroad special co
missioners, and to employ his best faculties to try to
move all excuses for less amicable relations; and th
the *Trent* incident was wholly unexpected and antag
istic so far as Seward and the diplomatic plans of t
administration were concerned. His habitual tenac
of purpose was likely to hold him to his policy of avo
ing a war. But there was the popular applause
Wilkes; and it always made Seward very unhappy
find that the people were against him, unless he felt co

the Duke of Newcastle is too true. Whatever you said to him
been used, first, to put the Ministry against you, and has now b
given to the newspapers. . . . God grant that you also foresaw
wisdom of concession to English tenacity about the honor of its f
Everything here is upon a war footing. Such prompt and giga
preparations were never known. . . . I was told yesterday, rep
edly, that I ought to write the President demanding your dismiss
—3 Seward, 27–29.

[1] *Lincoln and Seward*, 185.

[2] Welles, 186, 18

ent of quickly winning them back to his side. In such ircumstances the shrewd politician tries to wear a com- lacent look, while he waits until compelled to decide.

In a confidential despatch of November 27th Seward ıformed Adams that Wilkes had acted without instruc- ions, and that, as Lord Lyons had not referred to the ıcident, "I thought it equally wise to reserve our- elves until we hear what the British government may ave to say on the subject." Three days later he wrote ıat "we think it more prudent that the ground taken y the British government should be first made known o us here, and that the discussion, if there must be one, ıall be had here."[1] The slightest hint as to what was o be the policy of the government would have been of ıe greatest utility to Adams and Weed; but Weed omplained, as late as December 31st, "I have not eard a syllable from you."[2] Evidently Seward did not ome to a definite conclusion until a few days after he new the attitude of Great Britain.

On December 19th Lord Lyons acquainted Seward ith the general nature of Russell's leading despatch. Vith perfect diplomacy the British Minister expressed s willingness to accept Seward's suggestions as to the siest way to accomplish the arrangement Great Britain emanded. Lyons reported that Seward received the ommunication "seriously and with dignity, but with- t any manifestation of dissatisfaction"; he asked for vo days' time before giving an opinion, and expressed mself as "very sensible of the friendly and conciliatory anner" in which the case had been presented.[3] When ord Lyons called again, Saturday, December 21st, eward frankly said that other pressing duties had revented him from fully mastering this question, and requested that the formal presentation of the case

[1] 115 *War Records*, 1102, 1109. [2] 3 Seward, 32.
[3] 115 *War Records*, 1135.

might be postponed until Monday. On Monday m
ing, the 23d, the British Minister returned, read
despatch, and left a copy, which Seward promise
lay before the President immediately.[1]

By this time Seward had a clear idea of the s
of public opinion in Europe. Adams's warning
very impressive despatch of December 3d reached
department December 21st.[2] By the same date he
undoubtedly read Weed's letter of the 2d, the so-ca
Scott letter, and the London and Paris papers of t
or four days after the excitement burst forth. I
ton's despatch of the 3d and Adams's of the 6th arr
on the 24th and 25th, respectively.[3] Bigelow's le
was in Seward's hands on the 25th.[4] Probably a
Weed's letters prior to December 7th had been rece
by the 24th or the 25th. And the opinions of Ew
Cass, Walker, George Ticknor Curtis, and many ot
were before him several days earlier.

The President and the Secretary of State did
agree when they reviewed the case. Lincoln s
"Governor Seward, you will go on, of course, prepa
your answer, which, as I understand it, will state
reasons why they ought to be given up. Now, I
a mind to try my hand at stating the reasons why
ought *not* to be given up. We will compare the p
on each side."[5]

The principal feature of the President's draft w
proposal to arbitrate the *Trent* incident and to b
into view the precedents in analogous cases and the
tion Great Britain had assumed toward the existin
bellion. Doubtless because it was found to be unsu

[1] 115 *War Records*, 1142.
[2] Department memorandum on despatch.
[3] Department memorandum.
[4] Seward's autograph memorandum on the letter.
[5] 3 Seward, 25.

to the actual conditions, it was not even shown to the Cabinet.[1]

Up to ten o'clock in the morning of Wednesday, the 25th, when Seward's draft was ready to be laid before the Cabinet, no one except Blair and Seward seems to have favored a full compliance with the British demand. "It was considered on my presentation of it on the 25th and 26th of December," Seward wrote to Weed. "The government, when it took the subject up, had no idea of the grounds upon which it would explain its action, nor did it believe that it would concede the case. Yet it was heartily unanimous in the actual result after two days' examination, and in favor of the release."[2] Doubtless all the influences that Seward had felt were brought to bear upon his colleagues. Sumner attended the Cabinet conference on Christmas-day and read letters from Bright and from Cobden showing how much they deprecated war and how difficult it was to avoid it without the surrender of the Confederates.[3] A despatch from Thouvenel to Mercier was also considered.[4] It fully confirmed the reports about France's attitude. Undoubtedly she was glad to find Great Britain reversing her practice; but what must have surprised and impressed the administration was the apparently sincere and almost affectionate appeal to our government not to commit the fatal error of trying to defend what had been done.[5] Bates came early to Seward's support. He told his colleagues that to go to war with England would be "to abandon all hope of suppressing the rebellion"; that it would sweep our ships from southern waters, ruin our trade, and bankrupt our treasury. Yet "there was great reluctance on the part of some of the members of the Cabinet—and even the President himself—

[1] 5 Nicolay and Hay, 34.
[2] 2 *Weed*, 409; 3 Seward, 42, 43.
[3] 3 Rhodes, 529 ff.; 4 Pierce, 59.
[4] 5 Nicolay and Hay, 36.
[5] Sen. Ex. Doc. No. 8, 37th Cong., 2d Sess., pp. 13–15.

to acknowledge these obvious truths."[1] The risk o conflict with Great Britain was the decisive influence concession. That there should have been two opini about it is now almost incomprehensible. We m assume with confidence that this peril, emphasized the advice of Adams, Weed, Bigelow, and Dayton, v the chief factor in Seward's conclusions.

Bates also recorded, with perfect candor and tru why so many still hesitated: "The main fear, I belie was the displeasure of our own people—lest they sho accuse us of timidly truckling to the power of Englan The long session on Christmas-day did not suffice; the consideration of the question was continued on next day. At last, on the 26th, "all yielded to, and c curred in, Mr. Seward's letter to Lord Lyons, after so verbal and formal amendments."[2] It had already b rumored that Mason and Slidell were to be releas probably at the same hour in which the Cabinet was g ing its approval to Seward's draft. John P. Hale t the Senate that he had talked with many gentlen about the question, but "not a man can be found wh in favor of this surrender; for it would humiliate us the eyes of the world, irritate our own people, and s ject us to their indignant scorn."[3] It seems likely t this statement represented the opinion of four-fif

[1] Quoted 5 Nicolay and Hay, 36. Sumner saw the danger as cl ly as Bates. "War with England involves—(1) Instant acknowl ment of rebel states by England, followed by France; (2) Breal of the present blockade, with capture of our fleet—Dupont and (3) The blockade of our coast from Chesapeake to Eastport; (4) sponging of our ships from the ocean; (5) The establishment of independence of rebel states; (6) Opening of these states by trade to English manufacturers, which would be introduced by co band into our states, making the whole North American contine manufacturing dependency of England. All this I have put to President."—Sumner to Lieber, December 24th.—4 Pierce, 58.

[2] Bates's diary. Quoted 5 Nicolay and Hay, 36.

[3] *Globe*, 1861–62, 177.

perhaps nineteen-twentieths, of the people of the United States.

If Seward had known at first that Wilkes's act was contrary to international law, he would have foreseen that Great Britain would insist on the surrender of the prisoners, and that it would be easier to defend effectively a voluntary release than one that resulted from a demand.[1] Moreover, at the beginning, public opinion could have been quietly influenced if not controlled.[2] But after five weeks, when passions had become aroused and thousands of prominent men were committed in approval of the action of Wilkes, it was much more difficult. Seward's predicament at last was very peculiar; the prisoners had to be released, but it was important to justify this release in such a way as not to arouse the resentment of the great popular majority, or either to offend the House of Representatives or humiliate the Secretary of the Navy. Otherwise the administration would find itself greatly weakened, and perhaps unable to command sufficient support to save the Union. So it is not surprising that this reply to Russell is the most studied and elaborately adroit paper that ever came from Seward's pen.[3] After reviewing the leading facts connected with the incident, he proceeds to discuss it in its legal aspects:

"The question before us is, whether this proceeding was authorized by and conducted according to the law of nations. It involves the following inquiries:

[1] Lord Lyons, in explaining his own non-committal attitude pending instructions, said: "The American people would more easily tolerate a spontaneous offer of reparation made by its government from a sense of justice than a compliance with a demand for satisfaction from a foreign minister."—115 *War Records*, 1095.

[2] Lyons considered the press moderate at first.—*Ibid.*, 1100.

[3] The full text is printed in Senate Ex. Doc. No. 8, 37th Cong., 2d Sess.; 115 *War Records*, 1145; Bernard, 201.

"1st. Were the persons named and their supposed
spatches contraband of war?

"2d. Might Captain Wilkes lawfully stop and search
Trent for these contraband persons and despatches?

"3d. Did he exercise that right in a lawful and pro
manner?

"4th. Having found the contraband persons on boa
and in presumed possession of the contraband despatch
had he a right to capture the persons?

"5th. Did he exercise that right of capture in the m
ner allowed and recognized by the law of nations?

"If all these inquiries shall be resolved in the affir
tive, the British government will have no claim for r
aration.

"I address myself to the first inquiry—namely, were
four persons mentioned, and their supposed despatch
contraband?

"Maritime law so generally deals, as its professors
in rem, that is with property, and so seldom with pers
that it seems a straining of the term contraband to ap
it to them. But persons, as well as property, may bec
contraband, since the word means broadly 'contrary
proclamation, prohibited, illegal, unlawful.'

"All writers and judges pronounce naval or mili
persons in the service of the enemy contraband. Va
says war allows us to cut off from an enemy all his
sources, and to hinder him from sending ministers
solicit assistance. And Sir William Scott says you
stop the ambassador of your enemy on his passage.
spatches are not less clearly contraband, and the bearer
couriers who undertake to carry them fall under the s
condemnation.

"A subtlety might be raised whether pretended r
isters of a usurping power, not recognized as legal by ei
the belligerent or the neutral, could be held to be con
band. But it would disappear on being subjected to v
is the true test in all cases—namely, the spirit of the
Sir William Scott, speaking of civil magistrates who ar
rested and detained as contraband, says:

"'It appears to me on principle to be but reason
that when it is of sufficient importance to the enemy
such persons shall be sent out on the public service at
public expense, it should afford equal ground of forfei
against the vessel that may be let out for a purpose s
timately connected with the hostile operations.'

"I trust that I have shown that the four persons who were taken from the *Trent* by Captain Wilkes, and their despatches, were contraband of war.

"The second inquiry is whether Captain Wilkes had a right by the law of nations to detain and search the *Trent*.

"The *Trent*, though she carried mails, was a contract or merchant vessel — a common carrier for hire. Maritime law knows only three classes of vessels — vessels of war, revenue vessels, and merchant vessels. The *Trent* falls within the latter class. Whatever disputes have existed concerning a right of visitation or search in time of peace, none, it is supposed, has existed in modern times about the right of a belligerent in time of war to capture contraband in neutral and even friendly merchant vessels, and of the right of visitation and search, in order to determine whether they are neutral, and are documented as such according to the law of nations.

"I assume in the present case what, as I read British authorities, is regarded by Great Britain herself as true maritime law: That the circumstance that the *Trent* was proceeding from a neutral port to another neutral port does not modify the right of the belligerent captor.

"The third question is whether Captain Wilkes exercised the right of search in a lawful and proper manner.

"If any doubt hung over this point, as the case was presented in the statement of it adopted by the British government, I think it must have already passed away before the modifications of that statement which I have already submitted.

"I proceed to the fourth inquiry — namely: Having found the suspected contraband of war on board the *Trent*, had Captain Wilkes a right to capture the same?

"Such a capture is the chief, if not the only recognized, object of the permitted visitation and search. The principle of the law is that the belligerent exposed to danger may prevent the contraband persons or things from applying themselves or being applied to the hostile uses or purposes designed. The law is so very liberal in this respect that when contraband is found on board a neutral vessel, not only is the contraband forfeited, but the vessel which is the vehicle of its passage or transportation, being tainted, also becomes contraband, and is subjected to capture and confiscation.

"Only the fifth question remains—namely: Did Captain

Wilkes exercise the right of capturing the contraband conformity with the law of nations?

"It is just here that the difficulties in the case be What is the manner which the law of nations prescr for disposing of the contraband when you have found seized it on board of the neutral vessel? The ans would be easily found if the question were what you s do with the contraband vessel. You must take or s her into a convenient port, and subject her to a judi prosecution there in admiralty, which will try and de the questions of belligerency, neutrality, contraband, capture. So, again, you would promptly find the s answer if the question were, what is the manner of ceeding prescribed by the law of nations in regard to contraband, if it be property or things of material or cuniary value?

"But the question here concerns the mode of proced in regard, not to the vessel that was carrying the traband, nor yet to contraband things which worked forfeiture of the vessel, but to contraband persons."

. . . "But only courts of admiralty have jurisdictio maritime cases, and these courts have formulas to try claims to contraband chattels, but none to try claims cerning contraband persons. The courts can entertain proceedings and render no judgment in favor of or aga the alleged contraband men.

"It was replied all this was true; but you can reach those courts a decision which will have the moral wei of a judicial one by a circuitous proceeding. Convey suspected men, together with the suspected vessel, port, and try there the question whether the vessel is traband. You can prove it to be so by proving the pected men to be contraband, and the court must t determine the vessel to be contraband. If the men not contraband the vessel will escape condemnation. S there is no judgment for or against the captured pers But it was assumed that there would result from the termination of the court concerning the vessel a l certainty concerning the character of the men."

. . . . . .

"In the present case, Captain Wilkes, after captu the contraband persons and making prize of the *Tren* what seems to be a perfectly lawful manner, instea sending her into port, released her from the capture,

permitted her to proceed with her whole cargo upon her voyage. He thus effectually prevented the judicial examination which might otherwise have occurred."

. . . . . .

"I have not been unaware that, in examining this question, I have fallen into an argument for what seems to be the British side of it against my own country. But I am relieved from all embarrassment on that subject. I had hardly fallen into that line of argument when I discovered that I was really defending and maintaining, not an exclusively British interest, but an old, honored, and cherished American cause, not upon British authorities, but upon principles that constitute a large portion of the distinctive policy by which the United States have developed the resources of a continent, and thus becoming a considerable maritime power, have won the respect and confidence of many nations. These principles were laid down for us in 1804, by James Madison, when Secretary of State in the administration of Thomas Jefferson, in instructions given to James Monroe, our minister to England. Although the case before him concerned a description of persons different from those who are incidentally the subjects of the present discussion, the ground he assumed then was the same I now occupy, and the arguments by which he sustained himself upon it have been an inspiration to me in preparing this reply."

. . . . . .

"If I decide this case in favor of my own government, I must disavow its most cherished principles, and reverse and forever abandon its essential policy. The country cannot afford the sacrifice. If I maintain those principles, and adhere to that policy, I must surrender the case itself. It will be seen, therefore, that this government could not deny the justice of the claim presented to us in this respect upon its merits. We are asked to do to the British nation just what we have always insisted all nations ought to do to us.

"The claim of the British government is not made in a discourteous manner. This government, since its first organization, has never used more guarded language in a similar case.

"In coming to my conclusion I have not forgotten that if the safety of this Union required the detention of

the captured persons it would be the right and dut
this government to detain them. But the effectual ch
and waning proportions of the existing insurrection
well as the comparative unimportance of the captured
sons themselves, when dispassionately weighed, happily
bid me from resorting to that defence."

. . . . . .

"Nor have I been tempted at all by suggestions
cases might be found in history where Great Britain refu
to yield to other nations, and even to ourselves, cla
like that which is now before us. . . . It would tell li
for our own claims to the character of a just and magn
mous people if we should so far consent to be guided
the law of retaliation as to lift up buried injuries f
their graves to oppose against what national consiste
and the national conscience compel us to regard as a cl
intrinsically right.

"Putting behind me all suggestions of this kind, I
fer to express my satisfaction that, by the adjustmen
the present case upon principles confessedly Americ
and yet, as I trust, mutually satisfactory to both of
nations concerned, a question is finally and rightly set
between them, which, heretofore exhausting not only
forms of peaceful discussion, but also the arbitramen
war itself, for more than half a century alienated the
countries from each other, and perplexed with fears
apprehensions all other nations.

"The four persons in question are now held in mili
custody at Fort Warren, in the state of Massachuse
They will be cheerfully liberated. Your lordship will pl
indicate a time and place for receiving them."

This paper was highly characteristic of Seward.
opportunity to perform some great act that would s
his country from grave calamity had come at last.
held the pen and he was master of the situation
had often been the case in much less imposing circ
stances in former years. This answer was written
that graceful, flowing, self-confident style peculia
his ambitious efforts. It glided lightly over the diffi
places, substituting for thorough argument here a p
sible assumption, there a crafty implication. It el

rated and triumphantly dwelt upon the points that were most important to the special purposes. It fascinated and flattered the audience to whom it was chiefly addressed. To most Northerners—who could not judge whether his arguments were sound or fallacious—the idea that by surrendering the Confederates the United States were maintaining their consistency and catching Great Britain in a trap, and the sheer impudence of saying that they would be kept if it were a matter of importance to hold them—these points were greeted with merriment and self-congratulation, and were regarded by a great many as removing all question of fear or humiliation.

Those who had been as mad and reckless as anarchists and would have sacrificed the integrity of the nation to the stubborn resolve to retain the prisoners—and thereby increase their value to the Confederacy ten thousand-fold—soon forgot their folly and joined in the chorus in praise of Seward. The change that came over the learned international lawyer, R. H. Dana, illustrates the magic of Seward's art. In November Dana wrote to Adams, "Wilkes has done a noble thing and done it well"; but subsequently he said: "Mr. Seward is not only right, but sublime. It was a little too sublimated, dephlegmated, and defecated for common mortals, but I bow to it as to a superior intelligence."[1] Robert C. Winthrop sent Seward his congratulations, remarking that if it required courage to hold Mason and Slidell in the face of overwhelming and threatening armaments, it required still more courage to give them up in persence of so many violent popular demonstrations on both sides of the Atlantic.[2] The New York *Tribune* of December 30th said: "We believe the administration is stronger with the people to-day

[1] 2 Adams's *Dana*, 259, 261.

[2] December 31st. Seward MSS.

than if Mason and Slidell had never been capture
their surrender had been refused."

London became jubilant at the first rumor of a
orable settlement. Stocks went up and congra
tions were general. Under date of January 10, 1
Adams wrote: "The satisfaction expressed in this
everywhere, excepting among the small society of
Confederate emissaries and the party which habitu
looks to war as an attractive pastime, stands in rem
able contrast with the feelings which animated al
everybody six weeks ago." On the receipt of Sew
reply, Russell promptly informed Lyons that it
"her Majesty's government great satisfaction to
enabled to arrive at a conclusion favorable to the m
tenance of the most friendly relations between the
nations."

Seward's comments on his own acts were alway
teresting. We have noticed how general had been
excitement and determination to keep the Confede
prisoners, regardless of all consequences. On the
the Secretary informed Adams that "the United St
have maintained calmness, composure, and dignity
ing all the season while the British people have bee
intensely excited, and that in this, as in every other
they have vindicated not only their consistency
their principles and policy, while measuring out to G
Britain the justice which they have always claime
her hands." To Weed he wrote the same day: "
will see what has been done. You will know who
it. You will hardly be more able to shield me from
reproaches for doing it than you have been to s
me in England from the reproaches of hostility to
country, and designs for war against it."[1] About a
night later a letter to Mrs. Seward contained these

[1] 3 Seward, 34.

tences: "For the past ten days the public has expressed itself indebted to me for the performance of a task that it had before thought impossible. But the day before it was done it would have voted me incompetent to do any good thing. So, probably, it will be ready to do again, ten days hence."[1] Weed had favored dealing quietly and directly with the question. Seward subsequently explained his own course as follows: "I am under the necessity of consulting the temper of parties and people on this side of the water quite as much as the temper of parties and people in England. If I had been as tame as you think would have been wise in my treatment of affairs in that country, I should have had no standing in my own."[2]

Mason and Slidell and their secretaries were, on January 1, 1862, taken from Fort Warren to Provincetown, Massachusetts, about forty miles distant, and there put on a British sloop of war. They were then borne to St. Thomas, whence they continued their journey to England.

While they were on their voyage a vessel with a detachment of troops that were expected to be used against the United States, finding the St. Lawrence river full of ice, had entered Portland harbor. When permission was asked for them to cross Maine, Seward promptly ordered that all facilities should be granted for "landing and transporting to Canada or elsewhere troops, stores, and munitions of war of every kind without exception or reservation."[3] This was regarded as a most ridicrous climax, and a capital joke on Great Britain; and it was said that the London *Times* refused to publish Seward's letter of permission. It was a very happy ending.

It is important to know whether Seward's argument

[1] 3 Seward, 46. [2] 1 *Weed*, 640. [3] 115 *War Records*, 186.

was as sound as it was successful, according to popu
opinion. There is no question that the carrying
officers in either the military or naval service of
enemy renders a neutral ship subject to seizure
condemnation. There were no persons in the na
or military service of the Confederacy on the *Tr*
nor were despatches of any kind found; so the seiz
of the ship could not be justified by this rule.
defend what had been done, Seward undertook to ma
tain the novel proposition that Mason and Slidel
diplomatic agents, proceeding between neutral ports
a ship as free from Confederate control as any pac
between Calais and Dover—were contraband of w
He based his claim on these three references:

[1.] "Vattel says war allows us to cut off from an
emy all his resources, and to hinder him from sending m
isters to solicit assistance." [2.] "And Sir William Sc
says you may stop the ambassador of your enemy on
passage."

. . . [3.] "Sir William Scott, speaking of civil ma
trates who are arrested and detained as contraband, say

"'It appears to me on principle to be but reasona
that when it is of sufficient importance to the enemy t
such persons shall be sent out on the public service at
public expense, it should afford equal ground of forfeit
against the vessel that may be let out for a purpose so
timately connected with hostile operations.'"

It is not a little surprising that Seward should s
port so novel a claim by citations so vague, and w
out referring to or explaining the circumstances un
which his authorities announced these opinions. W
Vattel said was that an enemy's people might be
tacked and seized *wherever there was a right to com*

[1] "Und wenn etwas feststeht, ist es das Princip, dass feindli
nichtmilitärische Staatsangehörige am Bord neutraler Schiffe
Gefangennehmung durch den anderen Kriegführenden nicht u
liegen."—Marquardsen, *Der Trent-Fall*, 74.

acts of hostility. Vattel gave a perfectly clear illustration of his meaning. There was no right to commit a hostile act on board the *Trent*, unless she had forfeited her neutrality by carrying contraband of war; but that was what Seward was undertaking to prove. He assumed an analogy where there was none, and then used his false assumption to support his contention.[1]

Seward's second reference was to Sir William Scott, who was quoting Vattel and considering the case of the *Caroline*. The *Caroline* was a Swedish vessel that had been engaged as one of a fleet of French transports under the control of French military and naval officers.[2] She thereby ceased to be a neutral and became a belligerent ship; and England, then at war with France, had a right to commit acts of hostility against her. There was no real similarity between the case of the *Caroline* and that of the *Trent*. And what the learned judge actually said furnishes no support for Seward's claim.[3]

[1] Vattel's passage is as follows: "On the breaking out of a war, we cease to be under any obligation of leaving the enemy to the free enjoyment of his rights; on the contrary, we are justifiable in depriving him of them, for the purpose of weakening him, and reducing him to accept of equitable conditions. His people may also be attacked and seized wherever we have a right to commit acts of hostility. Not only, therefore, may we justly refuse a passage to the ministers whom our enemy sends to other sovereigns; we may even arrest them if they attempt to pass privately, and without permission, through places belonging to our jurisdiction. Of such proceeding the last war furnishes a signal instance. A French ambassador, on his route to Berlin, touched, through the imprudence of his guides, at a village within the electorate of Hanover, whose sovereign, the King of England, was at war with France. The minister was there arrested, and afterward sent over to England. As his Britannic Majesty had in that instance only exerted the rights of war, neither the court of France nor that of Prussia complained of his conduct."—Chitty's translation of Vattel, book 4, chapter 7, section 85.

[2] Dana's Wheaton's *International Law*, 639, 640.

[3] "I have before said that persons discharging the functions of em-

The third reference was to the decision in the case
the *Orozembo*, and was still more deceptive. The *O*
zembo was an American vessel that had been ostensi
chartered by a merchant of Lisbon, who subsequen
had her fitted up for the reception of three milita
officers, and two persons in the civil departments in t
government of Batavia, who, under appointment of t
Dutch government, had come from Holland to take th
passage to Batavia. This made the *Orozembo* a Du
transport, subject to seizure and condemnation by H
land's enemy, England. The carrying of military p
sons was regarded as conclusive evidence of the fa
The judge proceeded to speculate as to the significa
of carrying the civil persons:

"In this instance the military persons are three, a
there are, besides, two other persons, who were going to
employed in civil capacities in the government of Batav
Whether the principle would apply to them alone, I do
feel it necessary to determine. I am not aware of any c
in which that question has been agitated; but it appears
me, *on principle,* to be but reasonable that whenever it
of sufficient importance to the enemy that such perso
should be sent on the public service at the public expen
it should afford equal ground of forfeiture against the v
sel *that may be let out for a purpose so intimately connec*
with the hostile operations."[1]

bassadors are, in a peculiar manner, objects of the protection
favor of the law of nations. The limits that are assigned to
operations of war against *them*, by *Vattel*, and other writers u
those subjects, are, that you may exercise your right of *war aga*
them, wherever the character of hostility exists. *You may stop*
embassador of your enemy on his passage; but when he has arriv
and has taken upon himself the functions of his office, and
been admitted to his representative character, he becomes a
of *middle*-man, entitled to peculiar privileges, as set apart for
protection of the relations of amity and peace, in maintaining wh
all nations are, in some degree, interested."—6 *Robinson's Repo*
467–69.

[1] 6 *Robinson's Reports*, 434. Only the words "on principle"
italicized in the original.

Dana said of the opinion regarding the *Orozembo:* "Even as a *dictum*, it does not touch the case of a neutral vessel not let out as a transport, and merely having civil officers of a belligerent government on board, without other circumstances tending to show the vessel herself to be in the enemy's service."[1]

It was by such means that Seward made it appear that Mason and Slidell were contraband of war. After this feat it was like sailing with the wind and the current—in fact, argument was superfluous—to show that Wilkes had a right to stop and search the *Trent;* that the right was lawfully and properly exercised; and that, having found these "contraband persons," he had a right to capture them. Up to this point the Secretary, the captain of the *San Jacinto*, and the stormy multitude of hero-worshippers, were all in perfect accord as to the incident. By a long course of reasoning that was essentially sound, except in the first premise as to contraband, Seward maintained that by releasing the *Trent*, instead of bringing her into port for judicial examination and condemnation, Wilkes let slip the only chance of obtaining a legal justification for the seizure. He dealt mildly and cleverly with "the humane motive" and the "combined sentiments of prudence and generosity" that led to the release, and he declared, "This government cannot censure him for this oversight." So Wilkes himself may even have felt complimented, although the net result was a condemnation of his action.

Seward's course committed him to some very remarkable absurdities. In order to sustain his position, he had to cite irrelevant British decisions and to subordinate the principles and steady practice of his own country, which

[1] Dana's Wheaton's *International Law*, 641; see also 2 Baker's Halleck's *International Law* (1893), 298 ff.

favored increasing the rights of neutrals and restri
ing belligerent interference. After countless decla
tions, during eight months, that the Confederates w
not belligerents, but insurgents, his whole argume
rested on the fact that they were belligerents and th
their diplomatic representatives were to be likened
ambassadors of independent states. In the hope of
moving Great Britain's apprehensions, as well as
prevent giving any excuse for an alliance with the C
federacy, he had declared, less than four months befo
that no depredations would be committed by citizens
the United States, so far as it could be prevented, up
the vessels or property of any British subjects.[1]
now solemnly enunciated a doctrine that would just
American naval officers in seizing and bringing to N
York or Boston neutral packets, wherever they co
be found, transporting Confederate diplomatic age
or despatches. French, British, or German ships p
ing between European ports might be captured in
British Channel, the Mediterranean, or anywhere on
high seas, if they carried Yancey or Rost, or despatch
to them, even between England and the Contine
The oft-quoted Scotch verdict of "Not guilty — b
don't do it again," was not more illogical than Sewa
who undertook to avoid a *casus belli* by maintainin
doctrine that would surely throw the United States i
war with every nation against whose ships it should
enforced.[2]

[1] See *ante*, p. 195.

[2] As soon as Russell received Seward's communication he infor
Lyons that the British government disagreed with some of the
clusions, which he would discuss in a few days, and added:
the mean time it will be desirable that the commanders of the U
cruisers should be instructed not to repeat acts for which the Bri
government will have to ask redress and which the United St
government cannot undertake to justify."—115 *War Records*, 117
To Seward's interjected and gratuitous declaration that "if

The thorough method of Russell's formal reply to Seward's leading contentions in international law indicates that he supposed the note was for the British government. And one would naturally expect Seward to take pride in defending, to the utmost, the position that he had taken in this *cause célèbre*. The document was, indeed, addressed to Lord Lyons, and was forwarded to the British Foreign Office; but it was, in fact, written to the American people. And it had accomplished its chief purpose long before it reached London. So it is not surprising to find that what Seward called his "rejoinder"[1] merely declared: "The differences stated by Earl Russell involve questions of neutral rights in maritime warfare which, though of confessed importance, are not practically presented in any case of conflict now existing between the United States and Great Britain"; and then, in direct contradiction to his argument that diplomatic representatives were contraband of war, he said that the United States would follow or lead in any movement that promised to meliorate the law of maritime war in regard to neutrals.[2]

Two later Secretaries of State, who were good judges as to what was politic and sound, have criticised Seward's argument. Hamilton Fish wrote at the time:

"In style it is verbose and egotistical; in argument flimsy; and in its conception and general scope it is an abandonment of the high position we have occupied as a

safety of this Union required the detention of the captured persons, it would be the right and duty of this government to detain them," Russell replied that "Great Britain could not have submitted to the perpetration of that wrong, however flourishing might have been the insurrection in the South, and however important the persons captured might have been."—*Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 253.

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 316.

[2] 115 *War Records*, 1199. Marquardsen tauntingly remarked, after giving the text of Russell's reply of January 23, 1862: "Von einer Replik des amerikanischen Governments auf diese Auseinandersetzung

nation upon a great principle. We are humbled and d graced, not by the act of the surrender of four of our o citizens, but by the manner in which it has been done, a the absence of a sound principle on which to rest and j tify it. . . . We might and should have turned the af vastly to our credit and advantage; it has been made means of our humiliation."[1]

James G. Blaine concludes his criticism of Sewar argument by saying: "It is to be regretted that we not place the restoration of the prisoners upon fran and truer ground—viz., that their seizure was in vio tion of the principles which we had steadily and re lutely maintained—principles which we would not ab don either for a temporary advantage or to save wounding of our national pride."[2]

Not only has Seward's dictum, that diplomatic age are contraband of war, remained unsupported by auth ities on international law, but the United States ha taken care to prevent the repetition of such a blun as Wilkes made. Early in the war against Spain "'Instructions to Blockading Vessels and Cruisers,' p pared by the Department of State" said:

"A neutral vessel carrying hostile despatches, when s ing as a despatch vessel practically in the service of enemy, is liable to seizure; but not when she is a n packet and carries them in the regular and customary m ner, either as a part of the mail in her mail bags, or se rately, as a matter of accommodation and without spe arrangement or remuneration. The voyages of mail ste ers are not to be interfered with except on the clea grounds of suspicion of a violation of law in respect of c traband or blockade.

hat man nichts weiter vernommen, und in der That möchte es sch sein, vom Sewardschen Standpunkte aus, in einer ferneren Dis sion dagegen aufzukommen."—*Der Trent-Fall*, 174.

[1] 4 Pierce's *Sumner*, 54. [2] 1 *Twenty Years of Congress*, 58

"A neutral vessel in the service of the enemy, in the transportation of troops or military persons, is liable to seizure."[1]

The highest type of statesmanship is to extricate one's country from danger in the best way. But that is not the only type. Whether the last opportunity to save the Union should be thrown away depended upon Seward's decision to hold or to release Mason and Slidell. Had he favored retaining them, there was no one that could and would have overcome his influence. Therefore, what was done he did, and but for him it would not have been done. That his argument was so effective, although unsound, was a tribute to his truly marvellous skill in making bricks without straw. It was at least a political masterpiece. And, as the world of politics goes—but not as scholars think it should be—politicians that effectively serve the state are classed as statesmen. It sometimes happens that a general wins a great battle although he violates the most fundamental rules of strategy or tactics. A grateful country, whose failing cause he has saved, will not forget his service, even if military critics demonstrate that he wasted ten thousand lives and realized only a fraction of the possible victory. So, Seward's method was far from perfect, but what he accomplished was one of the greatest feats of the war-period, and has rightly given him lasting fame and honor in American history.

[1] Navy Department, General Order No. 492, June 20, 1898.

CHAPTER XXXIV

SEWARD AND THE POLITICAL PRISONERS, TO FEBRUARY, 1

Our record of Seward's various activities in 1861 not yet complete. Although he performed a mu larger proportion of the work of the department th any Secretary of State would now think of doing, is doubtful if it consumed more than half the time a thought he gave to public affairs. Probably the det tion of political offenders and the control of politi prisoners were the most distracting of all his cares.

The firing upon the Massachusetts regiment as it w hastening through Baltimore, April 19th, surprised a angered the North. Governor Hicks soon beca alarmed lest the sympathizers with secession might come excited beyond control and precipitate a civil w in Maryland. Hoping to avert this, he wrote a letter Seward requesting that northern troops should be tirely excluded, and suggested that Lord Lyons sho be asked to act as mediator between the Washingt and the Montgomery governments, so as to prevent effusion of blood.

Washington was still in extreme danger, and ala had become panic. It was necessary for the administ tion to temporize until northern troops should arri By direction of the President, Seward declared th "the force now sought to be brought through Ma land is intended for nothing but the defence of t capital," and that the new route *via* Annapolis had be chosen with the expectation that it would be "the le

objectionable." There had been times, he remarked, when United States soldiers were not unwelcome in that state; and the actual sentiment of national independence was such that no domestic contention "ought in any case to be referred to any foreign arbitrament, least of all to the arbitrament of an European monarchy."[1] These were discreet expressions, considering the dangers of the hour; but the people of the North, who had answered the call to arms with such patriotic enthusiasm, had assumed that the period of hesitation and mere self-defence had ended. Lincoln and Seward at once became objects of criticism and warnings that must have startled them.[2]

[1] 1 Moore's *Rebellion Record*, Docs., p. 133.

[2] Moses H. Grinnell, one of the wealthiest and most influential of Seward's friends and followers in New York, wrote to him, April 25th: "The correspondence between the government and Governor Hicks does not suit our people. There is a deep sentiment in this quarter repugnant to concession, and I assure you there will be trouble among our people if there is the least appearance on the part of the government yielding to these rascals. I beg you to treat these *villains* [in Maryland] as they deserve. No more soft words to traitors. The *Post* of last evening gave you hard hits, and, I assure you, your name is freely spoken of and with some censure." Again, the next day, acting as the spokesman of "twenty-five as influential men as we have in New York," he asked that his views be laid before the President, and added that the feeling was so strong that necessity if not patriotism would compel a response to it in order to prevent serious trouble. The correspondence with Hicks, he said, had caused intense indignation on the part of all classes. The New York *Evening Post* of April 24th asked: "How much longer is open rebellion to be met with assurances of distinguished consideration? How many more days will the government spend in elegant letter-writing?" From Erie, Penn., H. Ely reported, April 27th, that there was great dissatisfaction because a clear and free passage had not been made through "the rebel city Baltimore." "*You must demolish it if necessary, and at once*, or the strong indignation sentiment now resting upon the rebels will be turned upon the administration." N. P. Tallmadge, who had all along been for a peaceful solution, declared, April 28th, that the people would "not brook unnecessary delay. They require action—prompt and vigorous action—and they will not hold the admin-

At first Lincoln was unwilling to do more than or
General Scott, in case the Maryland legislature sho
attempt to arm the people against the United States
adopt the most efficient measures to prevent it, even
the extent of bombarding their cities, and, "in the
tremest necessity, suspending the writ of *habeas corpu*
But there was so strong a current toward secessio
and the secession of Maryland would put the natio
capital at the mercy of the Confederates—that on A
27th, the President authorized Scott to suspend
writ anywhere between Washington and Philadelp
This rendered it less difficult to deal with the m
dangerous men. Soon the authority was used
arbitrary arrests began to be made: the Baltim
marshal of police, the police commissioners, and ot
men of prominence were seized and sent to a Un
States fort. According to a plan devised by Sew
Dix, and General Banks, several members of the M
land legislature that were expecting to push thro
an ordinance of secession the next day were arre
in September, 1861, and treated like the other poli
prisoners.

One of the earliest cases was that of John Merryn
arrested near Baltimore by United States military
cers because he was lieutenant in a company organ
to aid the Confederacy. Chief Justice Taney issue
writ of *habeas corpus* commanding Major-General
walader, who had Merryman in custody, to appear
fore the court with the prisoner and explain the c

istration guiltless in any other course. This rebellion must be cru
out in the least possible time. Such a course will be the most eco
ical in money and lives. You must not wait for the deliberatio
Congress. Act whilst the spirit is up—let it not die down by th
couragement of delay. Make an example now that will last f
time—so that treason will not again show its head—and so tha
southern right of secession will never again be exercised."—Se
MSS.

[1] 2 Lincoln's *Works*,

of the arrest and the detention. Following the President's orders, Cadwalader declined to obey. The Chief Justice then delivered an elaborate opinion declaring that Congress alone had a right to suspend the writ. Numerous learned lawyers soon took up this important question, and a great discussion was begun, which is not likely to end so long as the Constitution merely authorizes the suspension without saying whether it shall be decreed by the President or by Congress.

With the administration the question was primarily one of political necessity. It was summed up in this sentence in Lincoln's message to Congress in July: "To state the question more directly, are all the laws but one to go unexecuted and the government itself to go to pieces lest that one be violated?" [1] Lieber said: "The

[1] The following paragraphs from Stanton's order of February 14, 1862, represent the views of the administration as to the political necessity:

"Every department of the government was paralyzed by treason. Defection appeared in the Senate, in the House of Representatives, in the Cabinet, in the Federal courts; ministers and consuls returned from foreign countries to enter the insurrectionary councils or land or naval forces; commanding and other officers of the Army and in the Navy betrayed our councils or deserted their posts for commands in the insurgent forces. Treason was flagrant in the revenue and in the post-office service, as well as in the territorial governments and in the Indian reserves.

"Not only governors, judges, legislators, and ministerial officers in the states, but even whole states, rushed one after another with apparent unanimity into rebellion. The capital was besieged and its connection with all the states cut off.

"Even in the portions of the country which were most loyal political combinations and secret societies were formed furthering the work of disunion, while from motives of disloyalty or cupidity, or from excited passions or perverted sympathies, individuals were found furnishing men, money, and materials of war and supplies to the insurgents' military and naval forces. Armies, ships, fortifications, navy-yards, arsenals, military posts, and garrisons, one after another, were betrayed or abandoned to the insurgents.

"Congress had not anticipated and so had not provided for the

whole Rebellion is beyond the Constitution. The C
stitution was not made for such a state of things; it
not dreamt of by the framers."[1]

Good Unionists frequently complained of having
send their sons to fight Confederates while men m
dangerous than if armed remained behind and were
disturbed in furnishing aid and encouragement to
enemy. From the latter part of July, 1861, a very
portant feature of the war-policy was to make polit
spies and Confederate sympathizers fear northern pris
as much as soldiers do the enemy's cannon. Until
middle of February, 1862, Seward had supreme con
of the system by which nearly a thousand men w
seized in different parts of the country and hurried
to one of three or four forts in the East.

The logical chief of such an organization was
Attorney-General or the Secretary of War. The
partment of State alone of all the executive branc
of the government had no officers in any of the sta
Why was such a charge assigned to the member of

emergency. The municipal authorities were powerless and inac
The judicial machinery seemed as if it had been designed not to
tain the government, but to embarrass and betray it."

. . . . . .

"In this emergency the President felt it his duty to employ
energy the extraordinary powers which the Constitution confid
him in cases of insurrection. He called into the field such mil
and naval forces unauthorized by the existing laws as seemed n
sary. He directed measures to prevent the use of the post-offic
treasonable correspondence. He subjected passengers to and
foreign countries to new passport regulations, and he institut
blockade, suspended the writ of *habeas corpus* in various places
caused persons who were represented to him as being or about t
gage in disloyal and treasonable practices to be arrested by sp
civil as well as military agencies, and detained in military cus
when necessary to prevent them and deter others from such practi
—115 *War Records*, 222. See also Henry Wilson's remarks in
Senate, December 16, 1861, *Globe*, 92.

[1] *Life and Letters*, 340.

Cabinet whose functions were to look after international relations? Important new responsibilities that did not clearly devolve upon others were often assumed by Seward as a matter of course. If he was not the wisest member of the administration, he was the most alert, the most energetic, and the best informed as to the greatest number of important questions. These traits, together with his ambition and Lincoln's wise recognition of his strong qualities, made him not the head of the administration, but in many respects the most active force in it.

Lincoln was responsible for the suspension of the writ of *habeas corpus* and Seward for the system, that soon developed therefrom. Because it was arbitrary, largely secret, and altogether unusual, it was either attacked too bitterly or defended without candor. Some of its features bore a striking resemblance to the most odious institution of the *ancien régime* in France—the Bastile and the *lettres de cachet*. A just war and a brutal massacre are very similar in some respects, but the motive may make one noble whereas the other is horrible and fiendish. If Seward had carried on his system in time of peace, he would have been the most despicable tyrant of the century. Its sole moral justification must rest upon its necessity. If there was no other means adequate to cope with the enemies of the government, then history will justify this method. On the other hand, if it was more far-reaching and severe than the circumstances demanded, then Seward will not be held blameless. But let us see first what Seward's system was.

Corresponding with the commercial blockade of the Confederacy, the Secretary of State created a sort of personal blockade of the North by requiring passports of all persons entering or leaving the United States. He appointed special agents at such places as Detroit,

Niagara Falls, Rouse's Point, and Portland, Maine, intercept men under suspicion. In nearly every ot respect he employed the officers of the other dep ments and of different localities, such as the milit commanders, the United States marshals, and the he of the municipal police.

The chief places used as prisons were Fort Warren Boston harbor, Fort Lafayette, in New York harb and Fort McHenry, near Baltimore. Others, like Capitol prison, which stood near the site of the new C gressional Library building, Forts Delaware, Hamilt and Monroe, and some of the military camps in the W were used for political prisoners detained for short riods.

Arrests were made for any one of many reaso where men were suspected of having given, or inte ing to give, aid or comfort to the enemy in any subst tial way,—as by helping in the organization of troo by supplying arms or provisions, or selling the bonds the states in secession; by public or private commun tions that opposed United States enlistments or enco aged those of the Confederacy; by expressing sympa with the South or attacking the administration; by longing to organizations designed to obstruct the pr ress of the war—in fact, for almost any act that i cated a desire to see the government fail in its ef to conquer disunion. There was, of course, a great ference in the character of the evidence in differ cases. Intercepted correspondence often told of treas able acts or purposes. Perhaps some ardent Union or some one merely for personal reasons, reported t John Smith in Maryland or Michigan was holding c munications with, or forwarding the letters of, Con erates in the South or in Canada; that Thomas Jo of New Orleans, who was to arrive in a few days, a bearer of important despatches from the Confe

ate commissioners in Europe to their government; that Richard Brown, of Georgia, was in New York selling bonds and was on his way to negotiate a Confederate loan abroad. In not a few cases the first notice the local officer or nearest United States marshal received of the case would be something like this actual telegram:

"DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON, *August* 17, 1861.

"*John A. Kennedy, Superintendent of Police, New York:*

"Arrest Charles Kopperl, of Carroll County, Mississippi, now in your city, and send him to Fort Lafayette.

"WILLIAM H. SEWARD."[1]

The person suspected of disloyalty was often seized at night, searched, borne off to the nearest fort, deprived of his valuables, and locked up in a casemate, or in a battery generally crowded with men that had had similar experiences. It was not rare for arrests regarded as political to be made by order of the Secretary of War or of some military officer; but, with only a few exceptions, these prisoners came under the control of the Secretary of State just as if he had taken the original action.

For a few days the new-comer usually varied reflection and loud denunciations of the administration. But the discomforts of his confinement soon led him to seek his freedom. When he resolved to send for friends and an attorney, he was informed that the rules forbade visitors, except in rare instances, that attorneys were entirely excluded, and the prisoner who sought their aid would greatly prejudice his case. Only unsealed letters would be forwarded, and if they contained objectionable statements they were returned to the writer or filed in the Department of State with other papers relating to the case. There still remained a possibility, it was generally assumed, of speedy relief by appeal

[1] 115 *War Records*, 485.

to the Secretary in person. Then a long narrati
describing the experiences of a man whose innocer
was equaled only by his misfortunes, was addressed
the nervous, wiry, all-powerful man keeping watch o
international relations, political offenders, and affa
generally. The letter was usually read by the Ch
Clerk or Assistant Secretary, and then merely fil
A second, third, and fourth petition for liberation a
explanations was sent to the department—but with
result save that the materials for the study of histo
and human nature were thereby enlarged; the Sec
tary was calm in the belief that the man was a plot
and could do no harm while he remained in custody.

Meantime it often happened that prisoners that l
first been confined in forts west or south of New Y
were forwarded to Fort Lafayette or Fort Hamilton
prevent overcrowding or to take prominent men
from their homes and sympathizers. This was the c
with the Marylanders. A large proportion of those w
were held more than a few weeks finally reached F
Warren.

Ere all this progress in captivity had been ma
friends and relatives had strenuously attempted to
a hearing before the Secretary. Probably they l
enlisted the influence of some prominent Republi
or "old-line" Whig who knew Seward. From dif
ent sources came a variety of pleas: the captive
in feeble health; or if, possibly, his associations a
sentiments had not been as loyal as could be wished,
had committed no act of treason; or he had an inv
wife and a family of children entirely dependent u
his support; or imprisonment made a martyr of l
and was creating much opposition to the governm
which would soon disappear if he were given his f
dom; or the alleged offence had been too highly colo
by a revengeful enemy or by a too zealous official.

most instances from one to three months elapsed before definite action was taken by the department. If it seemed likely that the offender would resort to disloyal acts in the future, the appeals were rejected. If the Secretary became convinced that there might be some mistake, he caused a special examination to be made of the case. Where adequate punishment seemed to have been already inflicted, the prisoner was released on condition of swearing allegiance to the United States and of promising to do no act hostile to the prosecution of the war or tending to aid or encourage the Confederates. If the arrest had been made without due cause, no prerequisites of release were required.[1]

[1] Here are copies of abstracts of a few cases taken from the Department's Record-book of "Arrests for Disloyalty":

"This man [Dr. Edward Johnson] was arrested by order of General Dix and committed to Fort McHenry about July 8, 1861, and from thence transferred to Fort Lafayette by order of the Secretary of State. There are no papers on file in the Department of State showing on what charges he was arrested. An order was issued from the Department of State, dated September 13, 1861, directing Lieutenant-Colonel Martin Burke to release Johnson on his giving his parole to do no act and to give no information hostile or injurious to the United States. He was released September 17, 1861."—115 *War Records*, 291.

"This person [Joseph T. Ellicott] was arrested by order of General Porter, provost-marshal of Washington, and committed to the Thirteenth Street Prison August 23, 1861. There are no papers on file in the Department of State showing why or on what charges he was arrested. Urgent application having been made for his release, the Secretary of State ordered his discharge on taking the oath of allegiance and stipulating not to enter or correspond with the insurrectionary States. He was accordingly released October 10, 1861."—*Ibid.*, 294.

"Francis M. Fisk is a native of Rhode Island, but a resident of New Orleans. He was arrested at the instance of Governor Sprague at Providence, R. I., charged with the intention of taking his son Frank south to join the rebel army, and committed to Fort Lafayette, August 26, 1861, by order of the Secretary of State, dated August 24, 1861. The charge against Mr. Fisk is supported by the affidavit of James E. Stevens that he boarded with Francis Fisk, son of Francis M. Fisk, in the family of Mrs. Mary Chamberlain; that Francis M. Fisk

Perhaps the four most famous cases and the ones which the Secretary was then, and has since been m criticised were those of ex-Senator Gwin, ex-Gover Morehead, of Kentucky, Charles J. Faulkner, and Senator George W. Jones, of Iowa.

It was one of the dreams of the secessionists t California and at least a part of Mexico were to be corporated into the Confederacy. Gwin's southern an cedents, theories, sympathies, and associations caused strong suspicion that he was enlisted in this enterpri In October, 1861, the postmaster of San Francisco wr to Seward that Gwin, Calhoun Benham, and J. L. Br had sailed from that port for New York, that they w "rank traitors" and were bound for the South.' Gene E. V. Sumner, who was a passenger on the same sh became convinced of the disloyalty of the three m and put them under arrest. Several witnesses gave e

came to the house of the said Mrs. Mary Chamberlain and told her am going to take my son Frank south to put [him] in the army.' order was issued from the Department of State, dated September 1861, for the release of Fisk on his taking the oath of allegiance giving his parole of honor to do no hostile act, etc. He was acc ingly released October 2, 1861."—*Ibid.*, 295.

"William E. Wright, of Marion County, Ky., was arrested by C nel R. W. Johnson, of the Kentucky Home Guard, on or about 24th of September, 1861, charged with having taken up arms aga the government of the United States or otherwise aiding in the rebel against the same. After his arrest he was sent by General Ande to Indianapolis and then by order of the Secretary of State to L Lafayette, and was afterward transferred to Fort Warren. It app by Wright's statements to some of his friends who petitioned for discharge that he had been to Bowling Green, Ky., to sell hor which were probably for the military service of the rebels, and he had been in the State of Tennessee trying to make some money his family, by what kind of traffic is not stated. On the 11th da January, 1862, Wright was released from confinement on taking oath of allegiance with stipulations against future misconduct. *Ibid.*, 303.

[1] The documents in these cases are printed in 115 *War Reco* 1009–20.

ence going to show that books or papers, or both, sup-osed to be treasonable, were thrown overboard by one r more of these men. Shortly after they arrived in lew York Seward ordered them to be sent to Fort La-ayette.[1]

Fortunately for the prisoners, George D. Prentice, the amous Louisville journalist and stanch Unionist, was Benham's brother-in-law. He hurried to Washington nd was surprised by Seward's cordiality and noncom-ittal answers to his request for the release of the three ien. Prentice was given permission to visit them, and as invited to report his impressions. Among other hings, he soon represented that before Gwin and Ben-am sailed they asked General Sumner if they would ncur any danger of arrest in embarking on the steamer, nd were assured that they would not. This was re-arded by the administration as important. Although General Sumner did not intend to give any assurances, he three prisoners were released on parole to come to Washington for an interview. On December 10, 1861, ney were unconditionally set at liberty, and an official emorandum stated that "the Secretary of State had een fully satisfied that no one of the parties had any isloyal purpose in his journey, and that the complaint hat they bore treasonable despatches or correspondence nd destroyed the same on the way to Panama is un-ounded."[2]

It seems likely that this decision was due to Prentice's nfluence in behalf of a brother-in-law, who may have

[1] On searching Benham a letter written by Gwin, February 8, 1861, as found which contained the following sentences: "The cotton ates are out forever. The border states will follow; it is only a ques-on of time. If no collision takes place reconstruction is barely possi-e. The chances are there will be two republics, North and South, ith amicable relations. Time will probably turn it into three." As s been noticed, Seward had been intimate with its writer for a onth after that date.

[2] 115 *War Records*, 1020.

been suspected chiefly on account of his associati with the disloyal Gwin. This is one of the few ca where Lincoln evidently took the matter out of Sewa hands.[1] Gwin's subsequent actions were so hostile the interests of the Union that it was a mistake no restrict his liberty to some locality in the North wh he could be watched.[2]

"Charles S. Morehead, of Kentucky, was arrested the 19th day of September, 1861, accused of being tively engaged in stirring up and promoting rebell and directly charged with treason on the oath of A. Sneed, marshal of the United States for Kentucky trict," says the Department's Record-book.[3] Moreh was one of those border-state "Unionists" of the "wh crow" type, whose sympathies and interests were wh southern. He had told Lincoln that "the true and w policy was to withdraw the troops from Fort Sum and give satisfactory guaranties to the eight remain slave-holding states, and that the seven seceding st would, not at once, but ultimately, by the mere forc gravitation, come back, and we should have a safer firmer bond of union than ever." Otherwise, he s Lincoln's hands would be stained with blood that co

[1] 115 *War Records*, 1020.

[2] Toward the end of the sixties Prentice wrote a long letter a this case to John A. Marshall, who printed it in his hysterical ' tory," *American Bastile*, 617–20. Prentice seemed to think it p iarly outrageous that Seward did not at once grant his request answer his letters. He claimed to have written four before recei an answer. Seward was not under the slightest obligation to rep all. Only two letters are to be found, and they were both of the s date. The Secretary's reply four days later indicates that only t two letters had been received, and that an earlier answer had not sent because he had been waiting for an opportunity to consult eral Sumner about the alleged assurance against arrest.—115 *War ords*, 1016–18.

[3] For this case, see 115 *War Records*, 805–25; 2 Coleman's *Critter* 333–44.

not be washed off by all the waters of the Atlantic and the Pacific.[1] Later, Morehead went to Georgia and spoke at Macon. His sentiments were not loyal to the Union, or he would neither have been urged to make a speech nor have lived to apologize for it months afterward. As an ex-governor of more than ordinary ability and wealth he had much influence, which he used in opposition to men that were trying to put down secession.[2]

His arrest was due to military initiative and Seward's relations with Morehead began at Fort Lafayette. It was not altogether illogical for a man believing that the law of gravitation was the only legal bond of union and that he held his "liberty by deed in fee-simple from God Almighty," to feel that he was the victim of malice when his opportunities for opposing the war were cut off. Such good men as Prentice, Guthrie, and Crittenden were soon asking for his release, but this meant next to nothing in respect to the merits of the case. Social and political influences of a personal character were usually the chief factors in such requests.[3] Morehead was soon removed to Fort Warren. As he would not take the oath of allegiance, fearing lest he might thereby lose his property within the Confederacy, his confinement continued until January 6, 1862, when he was given his freedom on pledging that he would not enter the state of Kentucky or any state in insurrection,

[1] Morehead to Crittenden, 2 Coleman, 338.

[2] Leslie Coombs, the veteran soldier and politician, who was helping organize and arm Union soldiers, wrote to Lincoln pronouncing Morehead "The most specious, plausible, dangerous of all our Kentucky traitors. . . . He scattered the evil seeds of treason broadcast through the South by his false statements in public speeches as to the loyalty of Kentucky. If he did not advise, he stimulated the invasion of Kentucky by his misrepresentations."—115 *War Records*, 818.

[3] Prentice urged the discharge of another Kentuckian whom he admitted to be a secessionist.—115 *War Records*, 807.

and that he would hold himself at the disposition of
Secretary of State. Not a trace of evidence has b
found to justify his violent denunciations of Seward.
the Secretary had been one-tenth as revengeful as
alleged, he would probably have kept this peculiar
triot in prison throughout the war.

After Charles J. Faulkner, of Virginia, returned fr
France he was arrested in Washington, in August, 18
on the ground that he was a secessionist.[1] Faulk
naturally expected that his case would be promptly
vestigated, but there never was a reasonable doubt ab
his disloyalty. However, before he had been impris
ed a month, Seward offered him his freedom provi
he swore allegiance to the United States. He decli
this proposition, declaring that there was no autho
for imposing such a condition. Finally, on Decem
5th, Seward gave him permission to go to Richmond
his promise to return to Fort Warren within thirty d
unless he should secure the release of Alfred Ely
member of Congress from New York, who had g
out to witness the battle of Bull Run and had b
taken prisoner. This opportunity was accepted,
the Richmond authorities accordingly consented to m
the exchange, which would not have been done if t
had not regarded Faulkner as good Confederate le
tender.

George W. Jones was another patriot believing i
sacred right to aid and sympathize with public enem
Marshall has made this picturesque soldier of fort
the subject of one of his most touching essays in
representation.[2] Jones continued to be Minister-resid
at Bogota for several months after Lincoln came i
office. He was an old friend and correspondent of

[1] 115 *War Records*, 463 ff.

[2] *American Bastile*, 375–84. For the official documents in this c
see 115 *War Records*, 1295–1302.

President of the Confederacy, to whom he wrote in May, 1861:

"May God Almighty avert civil war; but if, unhappily, it shall come, you may—I think would without doubt—count upon me and mine and hosts of other friends standing shoulder to shoulder in the ranks with you and our other Southern friends and relatives whose rights like my own have been disregarded by the abolitionists."

By the time Jones reached the United States at least one of his sons had joined the Confederate army, and the correspondence of different members of his family showed sympathies that were thoroughly disloyal. The Record-book states that the arrest was made December 0, 1861, as "a precautionary measure to prevent his carrying into effect a purpose he had repeatedly professed that he entertained—of going south to join his fortunes and his efforts with those of the rebels." On February 22, 1862, he was released on solemnly pledging not to render any aid to the enemies of his country. Subsequently he brought suit against Seward for five thousand dollars damages for false imprisonment. But there was no possibility of success; for the act of indemnity of March 3, 1863, expressly shielded from prosecution for search, seizure, arrest, or imprisonment any person acting by order or authority of the President, or under color of any law of Congress.

There were some unfortunate and even damaging exceptions to the general features already noticed.

The ex-colonel and an ex-lieutenant of some New York troops, called the Empire City regiment, made affidavits before a United States commissioner that one Marcus C. Stanley had been instrumental in breaking up that regiment and in other ways had shown sympathy with the South.[1] The United States marshal in

[1] 115 *War Records*, 766 ff.

New York forwarded the affidavits as if they w
reliable, and Stanley was soon in Fort Lafayette.
a few days Seward was informed on good author
that the prisoner deserved the thanks of the comm
nity for what he had done, and that he had in oth
ways helped the cause of the Union; whereas the co
nel was a disreputable character, and the regiment w
not fit to go forward as it was organized. Sew
promptly caused an able and independent police offi
to examine the case. The report left no doubt ab
the injustice of the arrest. Seward ordered Stanley
be released on taking the oath of allegiance, but
innocent man had already been imprisoned for m
than a week. Within a fortnight after the Secret
telegraphed, "Arrest Marcus C. Stanley . . . and se
[him] to Fort Lafayette," he received this note fr
the superintendent of police of New York city: "T
bearer of this is Mr. Marcus Cicero Stanley, late fr
Fort Lafayette. He is capable of imparting inform
tion to you that may be useful in regard to that
stitution." However suggestive of a time of revolut
this incident may seem, it furnishes the strongest
dence that the persons concerned believed that Sew
was open to conviction at all times.

One of the most dangerous yet important features
this extra-legal system was that its best service of
required prompt action on mere rumor or a plaus
suspicion. In June, 1861, Seward wrote a friendly le
to John E. Ward, who had lately been United St
Minister to China, giving him a passport and a permi
send his baggage to his home in Savannah, Georgia.
few months later, when Ward came North on his wa
Europe, Seward telegraphed to several different po
ordering his arrest and imprisonment in Fort Lafaye

[1] 115 *War Records*, 10, 85.

The Secretary soon became convinced that he had made a mistake. He promptly did all he could to rectify it.[1]

Seward had a correspondence with ex-President Pierce that illustrates more than one phase of the exercise of arbitrary power. It was as exceptional as it was exceptionable; it has been frequently overlooked. Franklin Pierce had been Seward's special aversion and political antithesis for many years. Before the beginning of the war he was such an intense hater of the antislavery tendencies of the North that he believed the South to be the aggrieved party. In April, 1861, he addressed a Union mass-meeting, but he never concealed his dislike for the war-policy of the administration. In the autumn of 1861 he made some speeches in the West which showed that he was one of the most conservative of conservative Democrats.

In many villages and rural districts of the North the narrow-minded enmities between Republicans and Democrats had not yet given way to the generous impulses of patriotism and national defence. At North Branch,

[1] The following letter, taken from 115 *War Records*, 85, is a partial explanation:

"Department of State, Washington, *October* 3, 1861.

John E. Ward, Esq.,

"Care of Messrs. Baring Brothers & Co., London:

"Sir,—I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated Quebec, 27th ultimo, and now take pleasure in transmitting to you the passport in accordance with your request. Owing to the representations of persons who, it appears, accompanied you from the South, it was deemed proper, with a due regard for the public safety, to obstruct you in the progress of your journey; but circumstances have since transpired which call for the removal of such restrictions, and the accompanying passport is, therefore, forwarded to you. If you deem proper to destroy this communication you are at liberty to do so.

"I am, your obedient servant,

"William H. Seward."

Why he should suggest that Ward might want to destroy this letter is not known.

Michigan, there was a noisy little nest of anti-war Dem crats employing their wits in puzzling and annoying supporters of the administration. One of these tave brawlers wrote a long letter, crowded with uncert signs and vague references to secret plots, one port of which was as follows:

"President P——, in his passage, has drawn many bi and influential men to the league. P——y, of the L D——t, sent a line to Doctor F—— (by H., the Morr elder), who as you perhaps know is just across the from Port H——. The league is doing nobly in M., and Wis. He is cautious, but in common with other gradually preparing the minds of the people for a g change. He expresses a fear that any attempt to d men will produce a premature outbreak. I think his is well founded. A member of the league in Genesee passed through the woods on his way with despatche Doctor F—— told that any attempt to draft our frie there would bring on an open rupture. I think our lea should look to this, as no doubt they will. . . .

"Yours, in the cause,

"∗]<⅔‖□"

The letter miscarried and came into the hands United States marshal. The writer was detected taken to Fort Lafayette to spend a few months. undertook to explain what he had done by saying it was merely an attempt "to 'sell' the Detroit trea shrieking press" and to get an amusing revenge on Republicans, who had freely denounced many of Democrats as traitors. Of course the United St marshal, the acting United States district attorney, the detective employed did not believe that the le was a hoax, but that it referred to the Knights of Golden Circle; and it was assumed that "Presi P——" meant ex-President Pierce.[2]

[1] For the whole letter and the documents in the Pierce cas 115 *War Records*, 1244–67.

[2] A Detroit correspondent also reported to Seward a not posit

On the strength of such evidence, Seward sent the llowing note:

"DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON, *December* 20, 1861.
ranklin Pierce, Esq., Concord, N. H.:
"SIR,—I inclose an extract from a letter received at this epartment, from which it would appear that you are a ember of a secret league, the object of which is to over-row the government.
"Any explanation upon the subject which you may offer ould be acceptable.
"I am, etc.,
"WILLIAM H. SEWARD."

The ex-President's long and solemn answer contained ese cutting sentences:

"Surprise, however, only increases as I pass from your te to the extract to which you refer as a sufficient basis r an official communication. Incoherent and meaning-ss as this extract from the vagaries of an anonymous cor-spondent seems to me to be, it is not a little singular that should have been sent for explanation to one who during s whole life has never belonged to any secret league, so-ety, or association. My name does not appear in the ex-act, and as there is not the slightest ground for any ference to me in the connection indicated, I take it for anted that your inference is wholly erroneous and that ither I nor anything which I ever said or did was in the ind of the writer.
"Nothing but the gravity of the insinuation, the high icial source whence it emanates, and the distracted con-tion of our recently united, prosperous, and happy coun-y could possibly lift this matter above ridicule and con-mpt."

Seward then replied as follows:

loyal remark which he had overheard by chance and which came m a man supposed to be the ex-President. At the same time he losed two clippings from Detroit newspapers: The *Tribune* pro-nced Pierce "a prowling traitor spy," but the charge was plainly de on the merest rumors; the *Free Press* soberly gave its reasons thinking Pierce to be a sincere Unionist.

"DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON, *December* 30, 18

"*Franklin Pierce:*

"MY DEAR SIR,—An injurious aspersion on your fame and loyalty came into my hands. Although it in an anonymous letter, the writer was detected and sequently avowed the authorship. The document become a part of the history of the times. I desired you might know how your name was made use of traitor to increase the treason he was encouraging. able to prepare a note to you personally, I devolved duty on the chief clerk of this Department. The ma in which it was done has given you offence. I regret it apologize for it with the only excuse I can make—nam the necessity of employing another head to do what o to be done, and yet which I had not time to do, person I place your answer on the files of the Department of S as an act of justice to yourself, and I beg you to be ass that all the unkindness of that answer does not in the diminish the satisfaction with which I have performe the best way I was able a public duty with a desire to der you a service.

"I am, with great respect,

"Your obedient servant,

"WILLIAM H. SEWAR

"It may be proper to state that adopting the form o dress to ex-Presidents of the United States used by the Mr. Webster, I have invariably left off all titles of ad as being most respectful."

To say that the writer of the mysterious letter avo its authorship, and then to conceal the fact that h clared it all a hoax, was an offence that needs no acterization here. Pierce met the transparent i cerity of this letter with well-deserved sarcasm reply of January 7, 1862,[1] and supposed the inc closed.

A little later the newspapers again took up the

[1] "CONCORD, N. H., *January* 7, 1

"*Hon. William H. Seward, Secretary of State, Washington:*

"DEAR SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge the recept your letter of the 30th ultimo. It could hardly have surprise

bout the reference to Pierce in the mysterious Michigan tter, and stated that the original was on file in the epartment of State. But they neglected to mention that ierce's answer to it was also there. The ex-President new how to deal with the annoyance. He caused enator Latham, of California, to offer a resolution call-ng for the Seward-Pierce correspondence, "and all the her papers relating to the same."[1] Seward promptly plied, saying that he transmitted therewith a copy of e correspondence "and of all other papers on file here lating to the same." But there was no more reference the sarcastic letter of January 7th than if it had never en written. Pierce had prepared for such an outcome; Latham called attention to the omission, and then

learn that I failed to discover in your official note a desire to render e a service. You will excuse me if I regard even a suggestion from source so eminent that I am 'a member of a secret league, the ob-ct of which is to overthrow this Government,' as rather too grave to ve been sent off with as little consideration as a note of rebuke might ve been addressed to a delinquent clerk of one of the departments.

"The writer of the anonymous letter, it seems, 'was detected and bsequently avowed the authorship,' and yet I am not advised wheth-he disavows reference to me or whether there was an attempt to culpate me in his disclosure. These were the only facts connected th him, his treason, or his confession at all material for me to know. uppose I am left to infer the latter, because, although my name does t appear in the extract to which my attention was particularly called, u still state that an aspersion upon my 'fair fame and loyalty' came o your hands. I think you will upon reflection arrive at the con-sion that the whole ground upon which the allegation is repeated uld, as a simple act of justice, have been placed before me. It was t the manner of your official note, as you seem to suppose, nor any m of address which awakened on my part a deep sense of wrong. ese, whatever they may have been, were not worthy of serious no-e. The substance was what I intended, as courteously as I could, very distinctly, to repel.

"I am, very respectfully,

"Your obedient servant,

"FRANKLIN PIERCE."

[1] *Globe*, 1861–62, 1370–71.

read the missing document to the Senate. Retribu
was not more swift than just.

Not one of the political prisoners was brought to t
as a rule they were not even told why they were arre
When the pressure for judicial procedure or a ca
discussion of the case became too strong to be resi
on plausible grounds, the alleged offender was relea
In the border states conviction would have been
tremely difficult, and a failure to convict would
reacted against the government. It was different in
England, and in states like New York and Michi
where the courts were in perfect working order.
adherence there to normal methods would have insp
less fear in evil-doers, it is certain that it would
furnished no basis for criticism, which, at times, w
heavy load for the administration. When there wa
outcry on account of the arrest of the Maryland l
lators, Lincoln said that "no arrest has been mad
will be made, not based on substantial and unmist
ble complicity with those in armed rebellion."[1] A
important feature of the practice of arbitrary arr
subsequently, was to prevent treason rather than to
ish it; and because the aim was precautionary, it
assumed that there was no need of further action
the precaution had been taken. Of course it would
been unsafe to be frank about such a theory.

Because there was no intention to prosecute, no
dence was collected after the arrest was ordered.
less the evidence happened to be very strong, the *ex-p*
pleas, declarations, and complaints in behalf of the
oner often indicated that Seward had proceeded
out sufficient precaution. The department never
up its case, while that of the defendant is often ne
complete. How few convictions in the criminal c

[1] Raymond's *Lincoln*, 378.

would seem to be just if one knew only the grounds on which the grand jury based the indictment, and then, at the trial, heard only the witnesses and the lawyers for the defence. Yet this is a fair illustration of the disproportion shown in the official records. And it is on this account that it is so easy to misrepresent the whole system.

For the general policy as practised toward political offenders in the border states, there is no more occasion to apologize than there is for the fact that cannon caused destruction. The Confederacy found it necessary to adopt a similar system. It is extremely doubtful if Maryland could have been saved from secession and Washington from consequent seizure if the mayor and police commissioners of Baltimore, several members of the legislature, and many prominent citizens of both Maryland and Virginia had not been deprived of their power to do harm. Governor Hicks, who was probably the best judge, approved the arrest of the legislators, and opposed the liberation of some of them even after their successors had been elected.[1] But there were some serious abuses of this arbitrary power in the far northern states.

The least excusable feature was the treatment of the prisoners. Month after month many of them were crowded together in gloomy and damp casemates, where even the dangerous "pirates" captured on privateers, and soldiers taken in battle, ought not to have remained long.[2] Many had committed no overt act. There were among them editors and political leaders of character and honor, but whose freedom would be injurious to the prosecution of the war. Fortunately for Seward's reputation, their custody belonged to the

[1] 114 *War Records*, 705.

[2] 2 Coleman's *Crittenden*, 334, 341, 342; 115 *War Records*, 470; *American Bastile*, 652–80, 687 ff.

War Department. It was largely due to Seward's c
recommendations, interference even, that their unne
sary hardships were not greater.[1]

It was inevitable that innocent men should be ca
in the dangerous machinery. It offered rare oppo
nities for the gratification of personal enmities and
display of power on the part of United States mars
and military officers. Seward could not fairly be bla
for things concerning which he himself was deceived
he often had no time to take precautions. But he sh
have foreseen that a safety-valve was indispensab
the form of some arrangement whereby all cases sh
be promptly and impartially reviewed. It happened r
than once that men languished in prison for weeks be
any one at the department even heard their names.[2]
the gates of the chief forts there should have been a
amining board of two or three able men versed in jud
evidence and familiar with the military and political p
lems in the localities from which the prisoners were ta
They would quickly have separated the innocent fron
guilty, and the harmless from the dangerous. They c
have decided in a few hours or days as to what restra
or punishments were necessary. Instead of making s
such provision, Seward relied upon occasional exam
tions, chiefly by Seth C. Hawley, the chief clerk of
New York police commission; by Robert Murray
United States marshal at New York, and by A
Pinkerton, the head of the United States secret ser
This plan was so very inadequate that the prisons
came overcrowded.[3] Although there is nothing t

[1] 115 *War Records*, 36, 37, 121, 123.

[2] Department's Record-book, *War Records*, 290–348, furnishe
dences of this and of other abuses.

[3] The following sentences are from a report made by a United
marshal to Seward, October 28th:

"Amongst the prisoners we found a number of men who o

dicate that Seward was fond of keeping men in confinement—in fact, the contrary seems to have been the case—yet his other duties were so engrossing that he naturally fell into the habit of waiting for political and personal pressure to be exerted before he paid much attention to the individual cases. The guilty could often command this more readily than the innocent.[1]

Seward's mental and physical traits were such that he undoubtedly liked the theory, but was greatly annoyed by the exercise of so much authority in this peculiar field. Without doubting his own abilities, he probably realized that the resources of the War Department were much better suited than those of the Department of State to deal with every phase of the question of arbitrary arrests, whether military or political. Accordingly, on February 14, 1862, the whole responsibility was given over to Secretary Stanton.[2] Soon a great many prisoners were released on parole. In a few days John A. Dix and Edwards Pierrepont were appointed

o social position and who have no standing in the community, and hose room would be more beneficial to the government than the pace they occupy. The main difficulty with regard to the comfort f the prisoners in the fort is the want of sufficient room, and by disharging those whom it is of no interest to the government to retain his difficulty would be obviated. These men, it would appear to me, ould not do the government any mischief, and it is only a matter f surprise how they came to be arrested. I would, therefore, advise hat some competent person or persons should be named by you to xamine into the charges against these men and report to you for our final action in the premises."—115 *War Records*, 121.

[1] Morehead told Crittenden that the guilty uniformly got out. 3 Coleman, 335.) His own case, Gwin's, and those of several others who could then command the services of distinguished Unionists, indicate that there was truth in the statement.

[2] 3 Seward, 72, says that this was done at Seward's suggestion to Stanton. "There is nothing whatever [in the official records] showing that Seward gave up the authority voluntarily or that Stanton ought it."—Leslie J. Perry, of the board of publication of the *War Records*, to the author, July 27, 1898.

commissioners to examine those still in military cust
They quickly caused nearly one hundred more t
liberated. In a note to Stanton, April 8, 1862, they
"We have this day examined the cases of several
oners who have been long in prison and who are deta
without just cause."[1]

There was current a story that Seward boaste
Lord Lyons that he could ring a little bell and cause
arrest of a citizen of Ohio or order the imprisonr
of a citizen of New York, and that no one on earth
cept the President could release the prisoner. I
made the remark, it is of no special importance. It
a fact that he was almost as free from restraint
dictator or a sultan, and he was charged with ac
accordingly. But the surprising thing is that in
great mass of documents on the subject of political
oners there are no manifestations of improper mo
or of extreme prejudice or of personal considera
except in the Pierce episode. His mistakes, save in
case, were perfectly natural and almost inevitable,
sidering the constant anxiety of the administration a
military affairs in front of Washington, and the nec
suppressing words and acts in the North that migh
dicate to Great Britain and France that the Fe
government was declining in strength. But no
will deny that Seward sought and was given too r
responsibility.

[1] 115 *War Records*, 277–79, 282.

CHAPTER XXXV

THE QUESTION OF EUROPEAN INTERVENTION, 1862-63

The outcome of the *Trent* incident disabused the minds of many Englishmen of the belief that Seward desired a foreign war, but it did not affect the economic influences working toward intervention. Louis Napoleon once remarked to one of the Confederates that "the policy of nations is controlled by their interests, and not by their sentiments."[1] The actions of France and of Great Britain during these years furnished excellent illustrations of this rule. It was not difficult to estimate approximately the losses that the two countries were suffering on account of the blockade; but the question that no one could answer was: What will intervention cost if it entails a war with the United States and a general disturbance of European politics? The belief that the North could not conquer the South, and that the attempt would not continue very long, was an additional reason for postponing all direct efforts to influence affairs in the United States.

After the beginning of 1862 there was no substantial reason to doubt the efficiency of the blockade. But the Confederacy argued at one time that it was folly to respect a blockade through which scores of ships ran with impunity; at another time it maintained that the blockade prevented Confederate independence and cut off the exchange of cotton and merchandise, without

[1] Bigelow's *France and the Confederate Navy*, 121.

which the distress must continue both in Europe an
the South. Plainly there was nothing in internati
law that would warrant foreign interference. So,
came, it must be the outgrowth of selfish interests.
some plausible theory or fiction might be regarded
sufficient excuse. However, Great Britain and Fr
watched the blockade like birds of prey eager for qu
where no risk was involved.

Near the end of 1861 the United States Navy De
ment purchased a score or two of old vessels, for
ly used as whalers or in the India trade, loaded t
with stone, and sank them at points in the channe
Charleston harbor and of the Savannah river, whe
was expected they would cause accumulations of
and alluvial deposits, and thus stop navigation.
New York *Times* of December 23, 1861, triumpha
declared that those vessels were filled with Massachu
rock, and would forever blockade Charleston ha
Although this device was not entirely novel, it was
unusual, and it was soon popularly known as a bloc
by a stone fleet.

In Europe it aroused great indignation, and many
nounced it a violation of the laws of war. Even Co
called it a "barbarism."[1] If the *Times* was right
the "forever," the trade of Great Britain and of Fr
was to be permanently injured; and Thouvenel so u
stood the signs. The general depression of manufa
ing and commercial interests in Europe was increa
"This is attributed to the blockade," Weed wro
January, 1862. "Europe asks how long this is to
And finally, assuming the answer, they say, is it
time to recognize the independence of the South?"
for recent successes at Port Royal, he believed th
combination would have been formed against the U

[1] 2 Morley's *Cobden*, 393.

tates. He thought the objections to the "stone fleet" ere more a pretext than an expression of a real griev- nce; yet he was confident that Napoleon had again ggested to Great Britain that they interfere jointly in he affairs of the United States.[1] On January 18th Iann reported to Jefferson Davis that he regarded it as ertain that the Emperor was to raise the blockade. In ct, the representatives of both the great powers grew ery indignant because they considered that the United tates had adopted a peculiarly objectionable method f evading the conventional duties of maintaining a lockade.[2]

Seward explained that the measures were only tempo- ry expedients. "No American ever conceived that the uman hand could place obstructions in a river which ie same hand could not remove. No loyal American tizen has regarded this war as one that can have any her than a brief duration, with a termination favorable the Union, casting upon the Federal government the sponsibility of improving the harbors of all the states." wo of the natural channels leading to Charleston harbor ad been in no way obstructed, he said.[3] As evidence of is, he added that a British steamer laden with con- aband had just succeeded in getting in. The London *pectator* of February 1, 1862, called this "a neat reply." nd the question soon ceased to afford any excuse for otests and threatening hints.

Cobden, in December, 1861, believed that three-fourths the members of the House of Commons would be ad to find an excuse for voting for a dismemberment the great Republic.[4] And Weed found the Emper- of the French and all his associates, except Prince apoleon, in sympathy with the Confederacy.[5] Since

[1] 3 Seward, 54, 55, 56.
[2] *Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 409, 410, explains Thouvenel's attitude.
[3] *Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 316. [4] 2 Morley, 390. [5] 1 *Weed*, 642.

October, 1861, Seward had felt much concern lest
French and the British Parliaments on reassemb
early in 1862 might assume an unfriendly attit
"The next will probably be a direct demonstratio
Europe for recognition on account of the rigors of
blockade," he wrote to Dayton in an unpublished
spatch of January 2, 1862. "If the military and n
movements now imminent shall be as successful as
think, we shall have much confidence in our abilit
meet with success the last and greatest foreign diffic
before us." Then he very prudently added: "At
same time, do not lose an opportunity for saying
with our past and coming successes we are quite
that the need of the blockade will not continue very l
If necessary, speak of it as a thing more and more w
in our power to modify, if not to terminate altogeth
In the same month he said, in a letter to Weed: "
I know this, that whatever nation makes war aga
us, or forces itself into a war, will find out that we
and will suppress the rebellion and defeat the inva
themselves." Then again a few days later: "Your
ters alarm me about the malign intentions on the
of Great Britain and France. . . . It will be a sad
if Europe intervenes. What we can do to prevent it
are doing."[1]

Very early in 1862 it was thoroughly announced in
rope that the Federal government was about to begi
aggressive campaign against the Confederacy. This
an admonition against foreign intermeddling just t
France was also very much engrossed in the difficult
of improving the condition of her finances.[2] In Febr
Weed wrote from London: "All is quiet now, in
expectation that an immense army and navy will s
results."[3] The news of the Federal victories, espec

[1] 3 Seward, 42, 43.

[2] Slidell to Benjamin, February 11, 1882.

[3] 3 Seward, 6

at Forts Henry and Donelson, was additional reason for procrastination. It put at great disadvantage the Confederate sympathizers who, in the House of Commons in March, took part in the debate on the blockade.

Neither the recent Union victories, nor the prospects of still greater successes in the near future, had much effect on the impatience of France. On April 9th, H. S. Sanford, our Minister to Belgium, had a long talk with Thouvenel, who told him that France "*must have* cotton"; that the French people were becoming irritated, and some of the communications he had received from the chambers of commerce were even menacing in their language; and he thought the government of the United States had unnecessarily stimulated this feeling by its vigorous refusal of communication with the South. "It may not be simply a question of policy abroad that we shall have to deal with, but of *public peace at home.*"[1] During the same month Weed sent to Seward many warnings of similar tenor.[2]

About this time Napoleon tried to persuade Great Britain to join him in some kind of a demand on the United States for the purpose of relieving the difficulties; and he used Lindsay, the Confederate ally and Member of the House of Commons, as his spokesman. Russell refused to recognize such an undiplomatic medium. But Napoleon at least convinced Lindsay and Slidell that his efforts had been *bona fide*, and that he would soon act on his own responsibility, unless, in case of the loss of New Orleans, which he did not expect, this might be inexpedient.[3]

It was hazardous to seem to be depriving Europe of cotton. To let it through the blockade would be to surrender the very means by which that staple had been

[1] Sanford to Seward, April 10, 1862. Seward MSS.
[2] 3 Seward, 85–97.
[3] Slidell to Benjamin, April 18, 1862.

made worthless to the Confederates. Yet in April We wrote from Paris that the United States must try get free from the charge of being responsible for t cotton famine. "So, if possible, open ports, and let t enemy refuse the cotton."[1] Lincoln's administrati had merely been waiting for a suitable opportuni This was offered by the capture of New Orleans and Beaufort, North Carolina, near the end of April. proclamation of May 12, 1862, these ports and P Royal, in South Carolina, were declared open to co merce. It was expected that this would tend to relie the tension.

After many weary months of preparation, McCl lan was now engaged in the great campaign that v expected to end with the capture of Richmond. Th won, it was assumed that the Confederacy would so collapse, for its northern line of defence between t Alleghenies and the Mississippi had been destroyed a the river was practically open everywhere except the neighborhood of Vicksburg. But the magnifice Army of the Potomac was soon to be checked in forward march. Near the end of June inferior nu bers of the enemy met and repulsed it; and, after week of hard fighting, McClellan effected a change base from the Chickahominy to the James river. several days McClellan's communications with Washi ton were entirely cut off. Therefore, there was reas for greater alarm and panic at the capital than had been seen.

Seward was one of McClellan's special friends, and l expressed confidence that he would soon conquer the C federacy. Nevertheless, when the news of McClella reverses reached Washington, the Secretary of State v ready with ideas and plans as to how to meet the cri

[1] 3 Seward, 85.

[2] See *post*, p. 352.

Lest Europe might draw too damaging inferences, he hastened to inform Adams: "The governors of the loyal states unanimously demand a speedy close of the war, and offer all the forces required at the President's discretion. The President promptly calls for three hundred thousand men. They will be furnished with alacrity."[1] This sufficed for merely a few days. On the 7th he made an explanation of what had taken place in Tennessee, Mississippi, and Virginia. He assumed that Halleck would capture Chattanooga, that Grant would soon be in possession of Vicksburg, and that Farragut's running past the batteries at the latter place had surmounted "the last obstacle of the navigation of the Mississippi." But no such good fortune was to attend the movements of these armies. As to the state of affairs in Virginia, some of Seward's statements were thoroughly misleading, and are to be explained only on the ground that he thought the government's interests demanded a concealment and misrepresentation of the facts. He said that the efficiency of the Federal forces had been improved, while that of the Confederates had been impaired.

"Every one of the battles was a repulse of the insurgents, and the two last, which closed the series, were decided victories. . . .

"If the representative [respective?] parties had now to choose whether they would have the national army where it is and as it is, or back again where it was and as it was, it is not to be doubted that the insurgents would prefer to it the position and condition on the Pamunkey, and the friends of the Union the one now attained on the bank of the James."[2]

Some wit appropriately received similar official announcements with the remark: "Undoubtedly McClel-

[1] 3 Seward, 110.

[2] *Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 125, 126.

lan has won a great victory, but what the people w to know is who is responsible for it."

Seward's activity was always especially interest whenever he became excited, as he had a right to at this time. Because Lincoln had rejected the prop tions of April 1, 1861, and the whole incident had b kept a profound secret, the Secretary was able to m a virtue of our attitude toward Spain and France. July 10, 1862, he wrote to Dayton:

"We have interfered with the dominion or the ar tious designs of no nation. We have seen San Domi absorbed by Spain, and been content with a protest. have seen Great Britain strengthen her government in C ada, and have approved it. We have seen France m war against Mexico, and have not allied ourselves with t republic. We have heard and redressed every injury which any foreign state has complained, and we have laxed a blockade in favor of foreign commerce that might rightfully have maintained with inflexibility. have only complained because an attitude of neutra encouraging to rebellion among us, adopted hastily unnecessarily, has not been relinquished when the prog of the war showed that it was as injurious as it was advised.

"Under these circumstances, if intervention in any f shall come, it will find us in the right of the controve and in the strong attitude of self-defence. . . . It here bring out reserved and yet latent forces of resista that can never go to rest until America shall be re quered and reorganized by Europe, or shall have bec isolated forever equally from the industrial and gov mental systems of that continent. European statesme am sure, before waging war against us, will consider t rights, interests, and resources as well as our own."[1]

About a fortnight later Seward learned that in E land and France there was again much talk of in vention. A long despatch of July 28th to Adams, a duplicate to Dayton, explained the aims and diff

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 372.

ies of the war and of foreign relations. It stated that the United States continued to rely "upon the practice of justice and respect of our sovereignty by foreign powers"; but lest this might admit of an erroneous inference, he added: "It is not necessary for me to say that if this reliance fails, this civil war will, without our fault, become a war of continents—a war of the world; and whatever else may revive, the cotton trade, built upon slave labor in this country, will be irredeemably wrecked in the abrupt cessation of human bondage within the territories of the United States."[1] With just enough sarcasm, Seward's spirit and resolution were displayed in these sentences taken from an unpublished despatch to Dayton, also of July 28th:

"France will not conquer both Mexico and the United States with one campaign. Certain politicians about the courts and the press seem to assume that this nation lies at the mercy of any invader or invaders who can muster an army of conscripts or fit out a fleet. We have no such fears that any European government thinks so. We know that in civil war, as well as in others, battles must be lost as well as won, and we should not lose our courage or resolution, even if not merely a battle, but a whole campaign, should result against us. We mean to practise justice and caution, with as much generosity as possible. We expect other powers to do the same, and so we expect to go through this, our unhappy civil war, without the complication of foreign intervention."

The Confederates were at a great disadvantage in trying to enlist active governmental assistance abroad. With their cotton they were, like Archimedes with his lever, confident that they could move the world if they once got a place to stand on. Neither France nor Great Britain would have long delayed recognition or the breaking of the blockade if the Confederacy could have

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 157.

guaranteed to them that their peaceful relations w
the United States would not also come to an end.
it was impossible to give this assurance. Except in
ments of enthusiasm, or as a result of theorizing, the C
federates never had much faith in obtaining the di
aid of the British government. After Napoleon's
signs in Mexico became apparent, early in 1862, the C
federates believed that he would not allow the No
to succeed. The first instructions to Mason and Sli
directed them to try to have cotton excepted from
blockade.[1] But they had not been long at their res
tive posts before they saw that the task of entering i
negotiations of any kind was to be very difficult.

Benjamin, the successor of Hunter as Secretary
State, was a man of quick perception and great enterpr
By the spring of 1862 he concluded that if the Con
eracy was to live it must obtain a status among nati
and break the blockade by which it was slowly st
gling. On April 12, 1862, he authorized Slidell to n
tiate a treaty with France, permitting free entranc
French goods for a period to be specified later, if
Emperor should cease to acquiesce in the blockade.
was well known that Napoleon felt much hampered
the unsatisfactory condition of the national finan
To overcome this difficulty, the Confederacy was wil
to give "one hundred thousand bales of cotton of
hundred pounds each, [which] would represent a g
to France of not less than twelve million five hun
thousand dollars." Benjamin thought that "such a
would maintain afloat a considerable fleet for a le
of time quite sufficient to open the Atlantic and C
ports to the commerce of France." This amount
not represent the limit to which Slidell might go
was suggested that the Confederacy would, perh

[1] Benjamin to Slidell, September 23, 1861.

uble the subsidy, and that the interchange of commodities "might absorb half a million or a million of ales." France was expected to send ships for the cotn—which, of course, they could not get until after they ad broken the blockade. The ships could bring merandise, and the profit on it might well be expected to nount to as much as the profit on the cotton; so that rance would make at least one hundred million francs, twenty million dollars. For the purpose of preparg public opinion in France for such a plan, Benjamin nt a special press-agent, Edwin de Leon, with a secretrvice fund of twenty-five thousand dollars. Benjamin ought that the carrying out of such an undertaking ould practically bring the struggle to a successful terination.[1]

Slidell had no difficulty in arranging unofficial meetgs with Thouvenel and other members of the Cabit, all of whom impressed him as favorable to the Conderacy. On July 16th he had his first interview with apoleon. The commissioner reported the Emperor as ying, that although it was the interest of France that e United States should be a counter-weight to the aritime power of Great Britain, yet his sympathies d always been with the South, and his difficulty was find a proper means of giving expression to these timents. He deeply regretted that France had ever spected the blockade and had not recognized the Conderacy after the battle of Bull Run. But to open the rts forcibly now would be a hostile act; mediation ould probably be rejected in insulting terms by the rth; a recognition of independence would be of little vantage to the Confederacy, and might involve France a war; it would quicken the Federal enlistments and engthen the administration in the ensuing election.

[1] Text in Bigelow's *France and the Confederate Navy*, 176–79.

Slidell suggested that France should declare Charle
Wilmington, and some small cities to be open ports
enforce the decree by arms. He thought it likely "
the northern press and government would bully
menace, but that experience had fully shown what
should be placed on their threats." Then he set
the proposition as Benjamin had directed, and, in
tion, he expressed the belief that the Confederacy
have no objection to making common cause with Fr
against the United States and the republican go
ment in Mexico.

If the very existence of France had depended
success in Mexico, then the proposition would have
a fair one. As it was, Napoleon was to get, if he c
something like twenty million dollars *after* invol
France in a war with the United States. He unders
how this would satisfy his sentiment, but not his i
ests, although Slidell was magnanimous enough to
"Your majesty has now an opportunity of securi
faithful ally, bound to you not only by the ties of g
tude, but by those, more reliable, of a common int
and congenial habits." What wonder that, as the
federate commissioner was advocating recognition
Emperor remarked, "with a very significant smile"
is very singular that, while you ask absolute recogni
Mr. Dayton is calling upon me to retract my qua
recognition of you as belligerents." Slidell expla
this as "but another evidence of the insolence o
Washington government."[1] Although Slidell saw
the Emperor was thoroughly non-committal on th
ferent points of importance, he nevertheless inf
"that if England long preserved [persevered?] in
nate inaction he would take the responsibility of
ing by himself."[2]

[1] Slidell to Benjamin, July 25, 1862. Bigelow's *France a*
Confederate Navy, 116 ff. [2] Bigelow,

Mason's path in England was even less smooth. The welcome he received did not equal his expectations. On June 23, 1862, he reported to Benjamin that the occupation of the principal southern port by the Federals had destroyed almost all chances of interference in regard to the blockade, and left only the question of recognition. Nevertheless, two weeks later he addressed a long communication to Russell, arguing that the blockade was effective neither in fact nor according to international law.[1] But the foreign office merely acknowledged its receipt without referring to its contents.

Almost simultaneously, in the latter part of July, 1862, Mason and Slidell made formal requests for recognition of the Confederacy by Great Britain and France, respectively. They expected to gain a diplomatic advantage abroad from McClellan's disasters in the Peninsula. Mason urged that an existence of eighteen months was sufficient evidence of stability, and he claimed that his government consisted of thirteen sovereign states, with an area of nearly nine hundred thousand square miles, and a population of twelve million inhabitants. Russell rebutted these claims by referring to Confederate defeats and the general uncertainty of the military status, and then he quoted a recent despatch from Seward in which it was asserted that the white population in the insurrection was under five millions, and that the Southern Confederacy owed its main strength to hope of assistance from Europe.[2] It would have been difficult to make a more offensive reply; and Mason and Benjamin expressed great indignation about it.

Thouvenel did not take any notice of Slidell's request for nearly a month, and then he merely sent word, unofficially and orally, that he preferred to remain silent unless an answer—which would be unmeaning—should

[1] 55 British *State Papers*, 724–27. [2] 55 *State Papers*, 733, 734.

be insisted upon. Naturally Slidell was chilled, an reported that he was "getting heartily tired of Pa for, as he wrote, "we are hard and fast aground and nothing will float us off but a strong and conti current of important successes in the field."[1] So the great European powers continued to procrastinate.

In July, 1862, Adams feared that intervention in s form would be soon attempted, unless affairs shoul come more favorable to the North.[2] Although Se expressed himself as unwilling to share Adams's a hensions, nevertheless, on August 2d, he gave specif structions as to what course the United States Min to Great Britain should take in certain circumsta After another exposition, showing that Great Br could not possibly improve her condition by interfe he said in an unpublished part of the despatch:

"If the British government shall in any way appr you directly or indirectly with propositions which as or contemplate an appeal to the President on the su of our internal affairs, whether it seem to imply a pu to dictate or to mediate or to advise or even to solic

[1] To Benjamin in an official despatch and in a personal letter, e August 20, 1862. [2] *Dip. Cor.*, 1862,

[3] "Is it probable that her intervention would mitigate the w alleviate the embarrassment she is suffering from it? The qu seems to involve a preliminary one—namely, what is to be the c ter of her intervention? Is it to be merely a moral one, or an recognition, with a declaration of neutrality, but not respecti blockade, and not refraining and restraining her subjects from vi it? Shall we not, in that case, be justified in withdrawing the r tion of the blockade we have already made, and in closing th we have opened to her commerce? If we should do this, wou recognition of the insurgents shorten the war, or would it allevi embarrassment she suffers from it? But it may be answered th would not consent to surrender these concessions, and would re force to save them. Then Great Britain would violate belli rights allowed us by the law of nations, and would become an

persuade, you will answer that you are forbidden to debate, to hear, or in any way receive, entertain, or transmit any communication of the kind. You will make the same answer whether the proposition come from the British government alone or from that government in combination with any other Power.

"If you are asked an opinion what reception the President would give to such a proposition if made here, you will reply that you are not instructed, but you have no reason for supposing that it would be entertained.

"If, contrary to our expectation, the British government, either alone or in combination with any other government, should acknowledge the insurgents, while you are remaining without further instructions from this department concerning that event, you will immediately suspend the exercise of your functions, and give notice of that suspension to Earl Russell and to this department. If the British government make any act or declaration of war against the United States, you will desist from your functions, ask a passport, and return without delay to this capital. I have now, in behalf of the United States and by the authority of their chief executive magistrate, performed an important duty. Its possible consequences have been weighed, and its solemnity is, therefore, felt and freely acknowledged. This duty has brought us to meet and confront the danger of a war with Great Britain and other states allied with the insurgents who are in arms for the overthrow of the Amer-

our domestic enemies; and then she would be at war with us, while, at least, some other commercial state would be maintaining towards us relations of neutrality and peace. Would Great Britain profit by a war with us? Certainly neither nation could profit by the war while it should be in actual operation. But it is said she might divide and conquer us. What would she gain by that? . . . But what warrant have the British government for expecting to conquer the United States, and to subjugate and desolate them, or to dictate to them terms of peace? A war urged [waged] against us by Great Britain could not fail to reunite our people. Every sacrifice that their independence could require would be cheerfully and instantly made, and every force and every resource which has hitherto been held in reserve in a civil war, because the necessity for immediately using it has not been felt, would be brought into requisition. I shall not willingly believe that Great Britain deliberately desires such a war, as I am sure that every honorable and generous effort will be made by the United States to avoid it."—*Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 166.

ican Union. You will perceive that we have approac
the contemplation of that crisis with the caution wh
great reluctance has inspired. But I trust that you
also have perceived that the crisis has not appalled us.'

A "current of important successes in the field"
in for the Confederates earlier than even Slidell co
have expected. After McClellan's failure, Pope was
in command of the forces in northern Virginia and pr
ised to wage an aggressive campaign. Lee sent Ja
son northward to occupy his attention, while he him
watched McClellan, who was forced to remain inac
by the James river during July, 1862. Early in Aug
it was foreseen that the next great battle was to
nearer to Washington than to Richmond, and somew
west of a line drawn between the two capitals. Alm
the entire month was consumed by manœuvring
marching and occasional engagements. Finally, on
29th, the two armies, including Lee's as well as a p
of McClellan's troops, met on and near the first bat
field of Bull Run. Pope's army was routed, and
rowly escaped destruction before reaching the fortif
tions on the Virginia side of the Potomac, in front
Washington. Instead of pursuing Pope, Lee marc
northward and crossed the river not far from Harp
Ferry. In an offensive campaign he hoped to sw
Maryland into the Confederacy, menace cities and st
farther north, pocket the District of Columbia,
capture or scatter the Federal officials. Just at
time the Confederates in the West were very agg
sive. Bragg and Kirby Smith were making daring
skilful marches across Kentucky to the Ohio river.
was only a few days later that Price and Van D
moved northward from Mississippi to cut off comm
cations between Grant and Rosecrans, in west Ten
see, and Buell near the central part of the state.

There was almost a panic in Washington during

early part of September. It was feared that Federal success was the only impossibility after the miserable failure of McClellan's and of Pope's campaigns. What wonder that men looked off from the heights of the District and almost expected to see the banners and hear the tread of conquering Confederates. The crisis, both in military and in diplomatic affairs, seemed to be at hand. Seward must have realized the danger, for near the middle of July he had said that a Union defeat at Richmond or at Washington would probably bring on recognition of the Confederacy, "to be either acquiesced in or met by war."[1] On September 7, 1862, Mercier, the French Minister, announced to the Secretary of State the opinion that it was time to recognize that the South could not be conquered. Was this to be the first step toward that intervention on the part of France and Great Britain that had been talked of so long? Of course much depended on the political status in those countries, but more on the aims of Napoleon and the opinions of Palmerston and Russell.

In France there was no deep-seated dislike of the United States, although the activity of Confederate press-agents had scattered broadcast the impression that the success of their cause would be an advantage to Frenchmen. But public opinion had hardly any effect on the foreign relations of the Second Empire. Napoleon's plans, where definite, were generally the product of somewhat dreamy schemes which were influenced at times by unofficial counsellors. His Ministers were frequently much in the dark as to his aims. They were "little else than upper clerks," wrote Dayton to Seward.[2] And Slidell, who recognized the fact, quoted one of the members of the French Cabinet as saying that he mere-

[1] 3 Seward, 115.

[2] These words were left out when the despatch of October 21, 1862, was printed.

ly played the rôle of supernumerary.[1] So the Secret
of the United States legation was undoubtedly cor
in his conclusion that the rumors about Napoleon's o
ions were merely what those about him thought tha
thought.[2] What is historically certain is that the
peror tried to convince each side that he was especi
favorable to it, while, in fact, his sole aim was to
both without scruple and without risk, if possible. W
him duplicity was a tool and dishonesty a habit.
wanted France to have cotton less because the ma
facturing interests needed it than because the lack o
was likely to embarrass his complex plans. He had
ready become involved in Mexico. He saw that
Confederacy was his natural ally, yet he had neit
the courage nor the decision of character to enter
an alliance with it.

Mercier was supposed to have much influence w
Napoleon in regard to American affairs. From the
he had been an impatient sympathizer with the Con
eracy, and he was quite devoid of the balance and g
judgment that characterized Lord Lyons. Howe
Seward appeared to regard his peculiarities and the
mors of his decided hostility to the United States
if they were the harmless and natural results of ea
associations with Southerners.[3] In the spring of 1

[1] Slidell to Benjamin, November 29, 1862.

[2] Schuyler to Seward, October 31, 1861. Seward MSS.

[3] The following sentences from an unpublished despatch of
28, 1862, to Dayton show Seward's opinion of Mercier: "As for
Mercier, he is not ill-disposed, but the contrary. His early ass
tions, however, in this country were with the insurgent leaders, wh
tainly then were very important and powerful personages, for they
tated policies to the previous administration. They are now trai
every day losing importance and prestige, as all traitors must.
Mr. Mercier does not see this. He is, therefore, understood to
doubter, a despondent of our success. It is suspected that it is
the result of his constitution. He wants cotton for France, and w
like it at any cost. But he is not likely, I think, to counsel any i

Mercier expressed regret that he was not able to go to Richmond to judge of affairs in that capital, and to look after some commercial interests of France. Quite unnecessarily, Seward helped him to make the trip.[1] As ought to have been foreseen, Secretary Benjamin utilized the meeting with his old friend to show how resolute and hopeful the Confederate leaders were. Mercier's sympathies were strengthened into convictions; and, of course, the visit gave his conclusions on the American question much more weight with the Emperor.

On September 7, 1862, Seward and Mercier had a conversation about the attitude of France toward the two belligerents. The account that the Secretary sent to Dayton the next day, but which has never been published, is the best explanation of the critical status:

"He [Mercier] proceeded: 'I think now that the Union is no longer possible. We therefore think, my government thinks, that what is best is that which will be nearest to what has been before, what is most like to what the Union has been. So that if there must be two confederacies, then they should be confederated confederacies.' Here Mr. Mercier stopped, and I took up the word, saying: 'Mr. Mercier, you can do this country and your own no greater service than by telling your government at once that this government neither has the thought, nor can entertain it, by whomsoever it may be suggested, that there are or can ever

erence to get it. I have no reason to think he wishes us anything ut good, and certainly he does not wish any evil to his own country r her chief. . . . I do not think that Mr. Mercier will immediately ave leave to go home. If he should I can hardly suppose that he ould be prepared to advise adversely to us. If he should go home he ertainly would want to come back. Could he expect to be received ere if he should do us injury while at Paris? I think he knows the ne where our forbearance must stop. If European statesmen canot see that they have caused us to isolate ourselves enough already, think Mr. Mercier can. He would prefer Washington to Richmond s a diplomatic residence—who would not?" Such reasoning was not kely to lead to an accurate judgment.

[1] See *post*, pp. 371, 372.

be two confederacies here, or any other government than t
Union, just as it constitutionally exists and has always be
He interposed to say that I must confess that circumst
ces must control, and that they now look very unfavoral
I replied that this government saw nothing in the cha
of circumstances but a new phase in the ever-chang
panorama, which would probably be followed by a new
different phase to-morrow. He said you are expecting a
tle soon. I replied: 'Yes. We expect a battle and a victo
but, however this may be, do not for a moment beli
that either the President, Congress, myself, or any
son connected with this government, will in any case
tertain any proposition or suggestion of arrangement,
accommodation, or adjustment, from within or witho
upon the basis of a surrender of the Federal Union.'
again replied: 'Certainly, but you know we are frien
and we are looking to the possibilities of your disappo
ment, and you would then think it necessary to adopt
best practicable measures for the preservation of the cou
and its welfare.' I replied: 'I must undeceive you enti
in that respect. Chaos, even if it must result from
efforts to save the Union, could not be worse than the
substitution that could be offered or found for it, if it w
to be overthrown. And chaos it must be if, indeed, th
were no alternative but attempts at composition of
strife, either on the offer of the insurgents, or through
intervention of any foreign powers, whatever their virt
might be. You know what France did to save her integ
in 1793. Do not for a moment let France believe that
people of the United States will do or suffer less to
themselves from the evils of social dissolution.' I s
'We shall prosecute this war to its end. We do not dist
our strength. We have actually in our army in the fiel
least seven hundred thousand men, and we are perfecti
navy which will be equal to any other in the world. Ou
sources are as fully equal to the exactions upon them as
resources of any power that may assail will be to sustain
assault. So far, then, from entertaining any idea of
vision of the country, or of new arrangements, we
maintain it against all who may oppose us.' I remar
'This is strong language, but it is the duty of this gov
ment to protect the public interests, and vigor of spe
as well as of action, is required in emergencies.' He
'Yes; but we have our interests also in the matter w
must be looked to.' I replied: 'Certainly, but the so

eignty of a state is our interest, which in its own councils must be held paramount in its importance to any incidental or foreign question.'

"He then asked me if you had written me anything about Garibaldi and affairs in Italy. I replied that you had not written a word. 'Have you heard something from Mexico?' I replied: 'Not a word.' These questions gave me an opportunity to say: 'Your government can see with what moderation and prudence we are conducting our affairs. We think France has trouble enough in Mexico, and she is likely to have some trouble in Italy. But we have drawn back our hands and sealed our lips in regard to those concerns. We forbear at all points, with all parties, on all sides. We have redressed every complaint that any foreign nation has presented, that was capable of being redressed, and we are ready to refer to impartial conventionany that we are unable to redress by our own exclusive authority. We mean, if we come into collision with any foreign power, to have not only the right on our side, but the position of self-defence.'"

In England the political conditions were very different from those in France. The aristocracy, and the manufacturers and shippers whose interests were affected by the war, had grown more outspoken in behalf of the South. Most of the Liberals, the antislavery leaders, the reformers generally, and the poorer classes, were predisposed toward the North; but as yet hardly anything had been done to enlist their support. Except during the excitement about the *Trent* affair, probably there never was a time when more than one-fourth or two-fifths of the population of England would have favored any measure designed to help the Confederacy. However, the friends of the Richmond government were very active in writing, speaking, and planning. London's ponderous "monarch of the press" — "the bad *Times*," as Lincoln jocosely called it, in contrast with 'the good *Times*" of New York[1]—almost daily hurled

[1] Russell's Diary, 572.

its thunderbolts at the cause of the Union. Likewi
for many of the reviews and periodicals hostile pe
were elaborating prejudices and meagre informati
into sententious dogmatism about the difficulties a
inconsistencies of trying to maintain the integrity of t
great republic.

But the "cotton famine" was the most powerful
fluence in behalf of the Confederates. It had gro
in intensity during the past year. Excepting the Ir
famine, the country had seen no such distress for
century. Because the mills could not obtain cotton
profitable prices, many of them were closed; and t
of thousands of laborers, especially in Lancashire, w
saved from actual starvation only by means of the m
energetic and extensive system of charity.[1] This gr
national calamity was known to be due to the war
America, and nearly every one believed that the ex
ing condition of things could not improve much wh
the conflict continued. Therefore, it worked with po
erful leverage toward intervention; and it was streng
ened by the opinion of millions that, as the ultim

[1] "In May of that year [1862], according to the best returns
could be obtained, out of three hundred and fifty thousand
hands, sixty thousand were out of work altogether; one hund
thousand continued to be fully employed, and one hundred
ninety thousand were working on an average about half-time."
same authority said that "from the commencement of the distres
to the end of June last [1863], about three million pounds
been raised, of which not more than seven hundred and fifty t
sand pounds was procured from the parish rates."—39 *North Br
Review*, 235–39.

The *Spectator* of May 3, 1862, said that the operatives in Lancas
and elsewhere averaged three and one-half days' work per week.
many districts, such as Wigan, Blackburn, and Rochdale, the dis
is of course much greater than this total would give any concep
of. In Wigan nearly half of the operatives are totally out of work.
In Rochdale nearly a third are quite out of work, and more than
are working less than three days a week."

ilure of Federal aims was certain, some way ought to e found to bring about peace and a restoration of the ıpply of cotton.

The attitude of the British government is not so clear, r at least not so undisputed. Nations never remember, hen they should, that likes or dislikes are pretty sure) be mutual. The North was very eager for the good ɔinion of England, although the people of the United tates had usually sided with Great Britain's enemies. s John Stuart Mill said, the two countries habitually ıdged of each other by their worst specimens.[1] Engshmen put the worst construction on Seward's acts ıd expressions, and those of Russell and of Palmerston ere similarly regarded in the United States. Nothing ıat Russell ever said was so well remembered as his mark at Newcastle, in October, 1861, that the North as fighting for empire, while the South was fighting r independence. Palmerston's harmless and true pleasıtry about the wonderfully quick movements of the ederals at the battle of Bull Run was enough to conıce most Northerners that he was an inveterate enemy their cause. Gladstone, who was Chancellor of the xchequer, was so confident of the ultimate success of e Confederates that he threw his influence in favor the recognition of their independence. But an unıased reading of Russell's official papers compels the nclusion not only that he meant to assume an attide between the two belligerents that would give no ıwarranted advantages to the Confederates, but also at he was often partial to the other side. His aim and ıty were to look after British interests in such a way international law permitted. Yet, as a rule, Englishen were so eager to improve their opportunities to ofit by the war that the government at times lacked

[1] 2 Motley's *Correspondence*, 115.

the courage strictly to regard its obligations as a
tral.

As soon as the news of the second battle of Bull
reached England, Palmerston sent a note to Russe
which he spoke precisely but unsympathetically of
result as "a very complete smashing" of the Fede
He also suggested that, in case Baltimore or Wash
ton should fall into the hands of the Confederate
would be time for Great Britain and France to ad
the contending parties and recommend an arrange
upon the basis of separation.[1] Russell expressed
opinion that what was known already would war
"offering mediation to the United States, with a
to the recognition of the independence of the Co
erates." He thought that after the Cabinet ag
upon the plan, it should be proposed to France, "
then, on the part of England and France, to Russia
other powers, as a measure decided upon by us."
case this should fail, he believed that the independ
of the Confederacy should be recognized.[2] The Pre
pronounced these ideas "excellent," and recomme
that, if France and Russia should agree—"and Fra
we know, is quite ready, and only waiting for our
currence"—it would be best to make the offer be
the middle of October, then just three weeks off. M
ful that the two armies had probably fought and
battle, he concluded that if the Federals had beer
feated, they might be "at once ready for mediation
the iron should be struck while it is hot." "If, on
other hand," he added, "they should have the be
it, we may wait awhile and see what may follow."[3]

During the first days of September, 1862, McCl
welded together some of the remnants of his own a

[1] 2 Walpole's *Russell*, 349.

[2] 2 Walpole,

[3] 2 Walpole, 350.

nd of that of northern Virginia and hastened up into Maryland. He soon met the Confederates, and on September 17th he defeated them at Antietam. To save what was left, Lee quickly withdrew to Virginia. In he West, also about this time, Bragg and Van Dorn ere checked in their bold marches northward and then ere driven back.

Napoleon had long been seeking some opportunity for int interference on the part of two or three powers. ut just now he was hedged in by peculiar dangers in urope, which made it hazardous to do anything likely lessen his strength at home. It was only a few days efore the full news of the Confederate reverses had been ceived that Thouvenel expressed the opinion to Dayn that there was not a reasonable statesman in Europe ho thought the Union could be restored, and he exected that Great Britain would soon recognize the Conderacy.[1] The Emperor discredited the seriousness of e Confederate defeats, for they were highly disappointg; and they left him in deeper perplexity because he sired to give practical and safe expression to his symthy with the South.

Slidell's account of a second interview with him, on ctober 28, 1862, makes this plain.[2] Napoleon felt comlled to act with great caution in regard to American fairs, fearing lest Great Britain, instead of joining his terprises, might endeavor to embroil him in a war with e United States, which would destroy French comerce. This was evidence of the value of Seward's rnings. Slidell tried to encourage the Emperor with surances that recognition would bring about peace thout giving ground for hostilities—which the United ates would shun; but if war should come, the Federal

[1] Dayton to Seward, October 2, 1862. MS. archives.

[2] Bigelow, 126–32, prints Slidell's account, but erroneously gives tober 22d, instead of 28th, as the date.

navy "would be swept from the ocean, and all their
cipal ports efficiently blockaded by a moiety of his
erful marine," and either the *Gloire* or the *Norma*
could lay Boston and New York under contribution.
was confident that "mad and stupid as the Washin
government had shown itself to be, it still had
enough not to seek a quarrel with the first power o
world." And yet Napoleon hesitated! "My own
erence," Napoleon was quoted as saying, "is for a
osition of an armistice of six months, with the sou
ports open to the commerce of the world; this woul
a stop to the effusion of blood, and hostilities would,
ably, never be resumed. We can urge it on the
grounds of humanity and the interest of the whole
ized world; if it be refused by the North, it will a
good reason for recognition, and, perhaps, for more a
intervention." Napoleon's idea was that several o
leading European powers should act together. Thi
exactly what Palmerston and Russell had contempl

The two greatest powers had done much coque
and each had seemed to say to the other: If our
ests were as great as yours, we should insist on havi
end put to the bloodshed, or we should at least de
cotton. Great Britain had evidently been waiting
state of affairs in the United States favorable to t
ceptance of foreign propositions for peace. Much a
ton was needed, the men at the head of the govern
saw that getting involved in a war would increase
lessen, misfortunes. Nor could a great maritime p
sure to use blockades as one of her chief resources,
to be very critical of the Federal blockade. Ther
the distinguishing feature of Palmerston's foreign
during these years was distrust of Napoleon.[1]
over, the British Premier had begun, in the summ

[1] Sanders's *Palmerston*, 217.

861, to make special efforts to have England supplied ith cotton from India and other British possessions.[1] ood results had been realized already. But Napoleon ad no such opportunities; while his passion for distant nterprises, and his wish to show to his people that he ad great influence with the United States as well as ith Mexico, were too strong to be resisted.

Therefore, on October 30, 1862, he instructed the rench Ambassadors to Great Britain and to Russia to vite those powers to join France in requesting the belgerents to agree to an armistice of six months, so as consider some plan for bringing the war to an end. rouyn de Lhuys, Thouvenel's successor, informed Dayn[2] that the plan was for the European governments tender their good offices, merely, and not to go farher unless the belligerents should jointly request it. reat Britain promptly and unqualifiedly declined the roposition. At first thought this is surprising, for she rself had been on the point of making just such a roposal. The complete change of mind on the part of almerston and Russell was probably due to three facts, hich they had not anticipated: the "smashing" of e Federals at Bull Run did not demoralize the Washgton government or lead to other results that were pected; the Confederates had lost in Maryland the restige they had won in Virginia; and the preliminary roclamation of emancipation[3] showed that the war as to become positively antislavery. Even if no rumor the character of Adams's instructions of August 2d of Seward's interview with Mercier on September h had reached Russell, he certainly knew Seward too ell to suppose that he would peaceably accept any sort

[1] Ashley's *Palmerston*, 210, 211.

[2] *Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 405; Dayton to Seward, November 12, 1862. S. archives.

[3] See *post*, p. 337.

of interference when the loyal people were rejoicing
what they regarded as a great victory. Russell h
cently told Adams that it was the purpose of the
ish government to observe strictly the rule of p
neutrality in the struggle.[1] But this, of course, di
mean that the independence of the Confederacy
not be recognized in case circumstances should wa
it. Russia's reply to Napoleon was also discoura
She was unwilling to adopt the proposed course be
she believed that it would not lead to peaceful re
yet if France and Great Britain should agree to a
gether on this question, Russia's representative at
ington would be instructed to lend to his colleague
not his official aid, at least moral support."[2]

"From Europe we hear little that is definite,"
Seward more than a month after the battle of Anti
"but there is manifestly some difficulty there in d
ing disappointments."[3] Yet rumors told of unfri
plans against the United States. So he continu
repeat, in different words, his plausible and re
arguments showing the necessity for the United
to insist upon absolute sovereignty in every inst
Negotiations for a treaty between the United State
Great Britain for the suppression of the slave-trad
been nearly completed. It was a subject in which B
public opinion had taken great interest. In an u
lished despatch of October 25th, he wrote to Adam

"If the question how such a recognition would
the action of this government in regard to the conv
shall officially arise, you will, in that case, state pro
and without reserve to Earl Russell that all negoti
for treaties of whatever kind between the two govern
will be discontinued whenever the complete and unb
sovereignty of the American republic shall be deni
the government of Great Britain."

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 224.

[2] 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 186

[3] 3 Seward, 136.

a few days later he said that the country felt stronger nd in better condition to encounter the dangers of in- ervention than it had at any former time; that if any dditional motive were necessary to sustain its resolu- on to continue independent and sovereign, that motive ould be furnished by an attempt at interference on the art of any foreign state.[1]

When it became known that France's proposal to reat Britain and Russia had been rejected, Seward isely concluded not to treat the incident as an alarm- g one. Napoleon's duplicity was well understood roughout the world, and Seward had seen many evi- ences of it. It is, therefore, difficult to believe that ere was not more diplomacy than sincerity in these published sentences sent to Dayton under date of ovember 30, 1862: "We shall in all cases speak di- ctly and explicitly to her [France], and we shall con- nue to understand her exactly in the sense that she xpresses. We know the French sentiment of chivalry, nd we do not suppose that France will willingly mislead s. In any case it is always more dangerous to mistrust magnanimous nation than it is to correct mistaken ex- ectations which are the result of a generous confidence." o he decided neither to comment at length on what nd "already lost its practical character," nor to ask xplanations. This showed great presence of mind. It as in perfect harmony with the rest of the despatch, nd it was sufficient to add: "The United States have nstantly said to all Europe that they know that the ving of the American Union depends on the American eople themselves, and not at all on the policies of for- gn states, severally or combined."

When the Confederacy saw that the need of cotton had ot sufficient strength to compel an alliance, other induce-

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 231.

ments were held out. What was offered to Franc
the spring and summer of 1862 was to be made m
more inviting in propositions to both France and G
Britain. In a long despatch of December 11, 1
Benjamin instructed Mason and Slidell to urge u
these two governments the adoption of certain meas
promising great returns. "The almost total cessatio
external commerce for the last two years" had "
duced complete exhaustion of the supply of all arti
of foreign growth and manufacture." The Confede
Secretary of State estimated that there would be a
mand for three hundred million dollars' worth of
ports within the first six months after a treaty of pe
and that the Confederacy had accumulated cotton,
bacco, and naval stores with exchangeable value m
beyond that sum. The North would reap the great c
mercial advantages of returning peace unless Engl
or France should make special efforts. He sugge
that the merchants of neutral nations should purch
the Confederate products in advance. The Confede
was ready to promise not to destroy them in any c
if the government of the foreign owner would agre
protect them from seizure or destruction by the Un
States. The establishment of depots of supplies in
West Indies, with improved means of transportat
would enable foreigners to take advantage of the o
ing of the ports. Of course it was foreseen that, if t
things should be brought about, every interested m
chant would become an active ally of the Confeder
But the great panacea, in Benjamin's opinion, woul
a complete armistice on land and sea for six months
it would remove the restrictions to commerce for
length of time.

Undoubtedly Napoleon had had some such dream
cept that he expected to gain the lion's share of
profits if his lead should be followed. Now he wa

a dilemma: if he should give up his plan of telling the belligerents how to settle their difficulties, it would be a confession to the world that he dared not proceed single-handed. If he should undertake to show that his proposition was practicable, might he not embroil himself in just such a war as he had long suspected that Great Britain desired to see him engaged in? He had been wise in one thing: he had repeatedly told the United States that his aims were friendly, and that he did not contemplate doing more than to make recommendations; so he had saved his bridges. It was only a few days after he received the replies of Great Britain and of Russia that the signs from the United States became more favorable to his scheme. The November elections of 1862 indicated a popular disapproval of Lincoln's administration, and many conservative politicians and newspapers advocated a policy that pointed toward a peaceful separation. Later in November came the news of Grant's reverses in Mississippi, but a much more serious matter was the battle of Fredericksburg. Because McClellan had not pursued Lee after the victory at Antietam, but had halted at Harper's Ferry, and then moved slowly into Virginia—all the time displaying an almost contemptuous independence of the administration—he was removed from command. Burnside superseded him, and soon moved the Army of the Potomac from Warrenton to Fredericksburg. After a delay of about a month, of which Lee took advantage, Burnside sent his troops against the Confederates in such an uneven encounter that on December 13, 1862, the Federal soldiers were the victims of terrible and useless slaughter to the number of thirteen thousand. The North trembled with horror, factions increased their wrangling, and many patriotic men despaired when they recalled the fatalities and blunders of the numerous campaigns in Virginia.

To Napoleon this looked like an opportunity fo hearing. His thoughts, as he wished them to be und stood, were expressed in a speech to the French Par ment, and in two instructions from Drouyn de Lhuys Mercier, all in January, 1863.[1] He told the legislat that "the condition of the Empire would be flourish if the war in America had not dried up one of the m fruitful sources of our industry," and that he would for an appropriation to aid those who had suffered fr the misfortune. Mercier was informed that the E peror would have been "chilled" by "the little succe of his overtures to Great Britain and Russia if he h not been guided by friendship for the United Sta His "sentiments" were "too sincere for indifference find a place" in his thoughts, and he could not be oth wise than "painfully affected, whilst the war contin to rage"! Aside from repeating his well-known op ions about the importance of peace, he now urged t commissioners from the two belligerent governme should meet on neutral ground to devise a means bringing hostilities to an end.

On February 3, 1863, Mercier presented to Sew the instructions; and three days later the reply of United States was sent to Dayton.[2] As on former oc sions, Seward diplomatically expressed his belief t friendly motives had actuated France; he spoke of " earnestness" of the Emperor's "benevolent desire for restoration of peace," and said that he did not for the traditional friendship between the two countr which, he assumed, had suggested this counsel. maintained that the cause of the Union had stead advanced; that there were no "North and South, no southern and northern states," but only "an insur tionary party, which is located chiefly upon and adjac

[1] McPherson's *Rebellion*, 345; 6 Moore's *Rebellion Record*, Diary
[2] McPherson's *Rebellion*, 345, 346.

o the shore of the Gulf of Mexico," and that the Federal esources were yet abundant, and its credit adequate to he existing emergency. At best these statements were nly partially true, but they had their purpose and effect.

The great strength of the paper was in the directness nd brevity of a few paragraphs, the gist of which may e given in these sentences: Could the French Minister f Foreign Affairs fail to see that it would be impracicable for the United States government, while engaged n an attempt to maintain its constitutional authority, o enter into negotiations involving the renunciation f that authority? If commissioners should be appointd they must come to one of three conclusions: that ne Union should stand; that it should be dissolved, r that the war should go on. There was no possibility f the first, for the representatives of the Confederacy ould surely oppose it, and the loyal people of the South ould have no voice in the matter. On the other hand, ne Federal government had not the least thought of reinquishing its trust or its aims; "and if it had any such nought, it would still have abundant reason to know nat peace proposed at the cost of dissolution would be mediately, unreservedly, and indignantly rejected by ne American people. It is a great mistake that Euroean statesmen make, if they suppose this people are deoralized."

This was rightly called a great despatch. It was an npressive suggestion to France to halt. Like the anver in the *Trent* case, it was soon published; it was oubtless written with that end in view, for the public inion of the North was a very important consideration. ome rather superfluous remarks explanatory of the Conitution, and the declaration that at least the people of ne United States were not demoralized, were features re to elicit popular applause. Henry J. Raymond rote from New York that Seward's reply met with

"universal approval" there.[1] And Weed called it ablest paper his friend had ever written.[2]

Early in March both houses of Congress passed olutions declaring that every proposition of for interference in the present contest was regarded "a far unreasonable and inadmissible that its only ex nation will be found in a misunderstanding of the state of the question, and of the real character of war in which the republic is engaged"; that becaus would encourage those in insurrection, Congress w be "obliged to look upon any further attempt in same direction as an unfriendly act." The warning positive, but it was expressed in diplomatic langu And the President was requested to have the resolut transmitted to the Ministers of the United States communication to the governments to which they accredited.[3] This not only brought all loyal peopl a full knowledge of what was to be expected, but it told the world to keep aloof. Yet this was only gi wider notice of what Seward had said repeatedly, often in stronger words.

The strength of the influences for or against i vention varied from time to time. Until the sprin 1863, the distress caused by the lack of cotton was most serious of all the European grievances. Altho Great Britain suffered most, the chance of obtai cotton from new sources—subsequently realized great extent—made interference seem less impera The certainty of incurring enormous losses in cas a conflict with the United States acted as her restraint. Mason was entirely right, as all signs cated, when, on February 9, 1863, he reported tha

[1] February 17, 1863. Seward MS.
[2] R. M. Blatchford to Seward, March 7, 1863. Seward MSS
[3] McPherson's *Rebellion*, 346.

hough both the Ministry and the opposition agreed hat separation was final, they did not think the time or recognition had come; for both parties had "a fixed urpose to run no risk of a broil, even far less a war, vith the United States." Innumerable and reliable au- horities make this much certain: the British Cabinet oresaw that an offer of mediation would be prompt- y rejected; that merely to recognize the independence f the Confederacy would be futile unless it entailed a var with the United States, and that that would de- rive Great Britain of her gains in shipping and multi- ly her misfortunes. Russell was wise in avoiding the rst step lest he might be pushed forward to the last. Napoleon acted from more complex motives. The in- erests at home and the possible profits in Mexico seemed o order a bold advance; but the danger, in 1862, of be- ng involved in hostilities about Italian affairs, and, in 863, of being drawn into the Polish revolution, warned im to be cautious and to wait. Seward had said in May, 862, that intervention was "sure to come just as soon s the American people make up their minds to sub- nit to it."[1] By almost every form of expression—from simple appeal to moral sentiments down to angry hreats that barely missed representing a foreign war s desired—he made it plain that he would resent in- rmeddling. The action of Congress showed that he ould be fully supported. At last no one misunder- ood Seward.

After the early part of 1863, some of the conditions hanged very rapidly. The pressure for American cotton ecame less, and the development of a strong antisla- ery policy on the part of Lincoln's administration had marked effect abroad, as is soon to be noticed. Inter- ntion continued to be talked of, and would probably

[1] 3 Seward, 96.

have come in some form if the Federal forces had b
defeated at both Vicksburg and Gettysburg. But a
July, 1863, as will be seen, the great danger was in
nection with the Confederate warships that had alre
been purchased in England, and others that were
pected to be built there or in France.

CHAPTER XXXVI

SLAVERY AND FOREIGN RELATIONS

Of all the questions relating to the Civil War, the two ections have found it most difficult to agree as to the ature of its cause and its purpose. Even the abolition- sts with but one idea, who foresaw that secession would lestroy slavery, did not at first maintain that emancipa- ion either was or should be the chief aim. Although the Confederates called slavery the corner-stone of their new olitical edifice, they imagined that the object of their truggle was to secure greater state rights, more com- nercial freedom, and a harmonious, fraternal govern- nent. By the general expression of "war for the Union," r "war for independence," the respective leaders de- cribed the immediate aim without going back to the eal origin or forward to the probable results of the onflict.

The basis from which Seward argued with foreign owers was that, as the sovereignty of the United States ad not been overthrown, the acts and purposes of the Confederates and the question of slavery, were purely omestic affairs which could be ignored or brought to ne front, as public sentiment and military interests de- anded. So the first instructions to Adams said: "You ill not consent to draw into debate before the British overnment any opposing moral principles which may e supposed to lie at the foundation of the controversy etween those states and the Federal Union." And to ayton he expressed these opinions: "The territories

will remain in all respects the same, whether the r
olution shall succeed or shall fail. The condition
slavery in the several states will remain just the sa
whether it succeed or fail." [1]

Consistency was not the most conspicuous of Sewa
virtues. If he had not been speculating with a par
ular object in view, probably his conclusion would h
agreed with the one announced in 1850, and frequer
proclaimed since that time—namely, that a civil
would bring on "violent but complete and immedi
emancipation" [2] In fact, just a week before the date
the instructions to Dayton, Seward remarked: "We
in a war, and wars work out results not contempla
by either side. It is a war for and against the Uni
but no man can foretell how far it will go, or how
it will affect other interests, slavery among the res
A very perplexing philosopher, indeed. But our d
is to try to understand him. In one case he was
doubtedly considering what could not be done acc
ing to the strict letter of the Constitution, and in
other what might come as a war-measure, which is o
merely a modern and evasive euphemism for the anci
maxim, *Inter arma silent leges.* Undoubtedly each o
ion was designed to be serviceable in its time and pl

The heat of revolutionary passion increased with
temperature of the spring and summer of 1861.
abolitionists, now rapidly increasing in number, insis
that to emancipate the slaves of Confederates wo
quickly end the war. The adoption of such a pol
then, would have seemed to justify what the secess
ists had said in the past about Republican purposes
would have transformed loyal slave-holders into C
federate allies, and have cost Lincoln's administra
most of the support it was receiving from the figh

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 76, 198. [2] 1 *Works*, 86. [3] 2 Seward, 6

lement among southern Unionists and northern Dem-
ocrats and conservatives. The routed and frightened
troops from the first battle of Bull Run had hardly
reached Washington when Crittenden, whose devotion
to the Union depended on no *if*, brought forward a resolu-
tion declaring that the war was not for conquest or to
interfere "with the rights or established institutions"
of the southern states, "but to defend and maintain
the supremacy of the Constitution and to preserve the
Union with all the dignity, equality, and rights of the
several states unimpaired; that as soon as these objects
are accomplished the war ought to cease." Almost im-
mediately, and with close approach to unanimity, the
members of the House and of the Senate pledged them-
selves to these declarations. This was a Congressional
approval of Seward's theory—so often mentioned dur-
ing the preceding eight months—that the Union, not
slavery, was the paramount issue.

In the next few weeks was passed the first of the
measures providing for the confiscation of all property,
including slaves, used in support of the insurrection. In
various ways slavery was weakened in all those parts of
the South to which Federal troops were sent; and in
August, 1861, Frémont issued a proclamation in Missouri,
declaring the confiscation of the property of all per-
sons that had taken up arms against the United States.
But Lincoln ordered that slaves should be prohibited
from entering or following the military camps, and he
changed the effect of Frémont's proclamation so that
only property used against the government should be
confiscated. This opposition to purely antislavery aims
excited the bitterest criticism among abolitionists; but
Lincoln refused to go beyond the course adopted by
Congress. The immediate purpose was to save Mary-
land, and to win Kentucky and as much as possible of
Virginia and Tennessee.

The attitude of the Confederates toward slavery a
their interpretations of the motives of the Federal g
ernment caused Lincoln's administration much ann
ance. While they indignantly denied that they w
fighting for the protection and expansion of slavery, th
disagreed among themselves both as to their ultim
aims and as to those of their enemies. The first instr
tions to Yancey, Rost, and Mann authorized these co
missioners to offer to assume obligations for all treat
in existence between the United States and Great B
tain except the one for the suppression of the slave-trad
On May 18, 1861, Toombs wrote to them that it w
obvious that, "however it may be concealed under t
guise of patriotism and fidelity to the late Federal co
pact, the real motive which actuates Mr. Lincoln a
those who now sustain his acts, is to accomplish by fo
of arms that which the masses of the northern peo
have long sought to effect, namely, the overthrow
our domestic institutions, the devastation and destr
tion of our social interests, and the reduction of t
southern states to the condition of subject provinces.'[1]

But it was not long before the Confederates s
their opportunity. On August 14, 1861, the commissi
ers adroitly attempted to counteract English prejud
against recognizing a slave-holding government
maintaining that the South had not seceded to s
slavery, and that it was not the aim of the United Sta
to free the slave, but "to keep him in subjection to
owner, and to control his labor through the legislat
channels, which the Lincoln government designs to fo
upon the master." This was made very plausible
referring to some of the attempts to prevent secess
—a constitutional amendment, proposed the previ
winter, against governmental interference with slave

[1] Toombs to commissioners, March 16, 1861.

nd Lincoln's disavowals of an antislavery crusade. After such an explanation, they felt confident that nglish sentiment could have no affection for the North; "nay, it would probably become disgusted with canting hypocrisy which would enlist those sympahies on false pretences." Lest this *exposé* might not uit every contingency, or not be sufficiently damagng, the commissioners were ready to admit that the olicy might be changed—"a policy based at present nore upon a wily view of what is to be its effect" in he South than upon any honest desire to uphold the Constitution. But in case of a change of purpose, they rophesied, a system of labor would be destroyed that ad reared up a vast commerce between America and he great states of Europe, "which, it is supposed, now ives bread to ten millions of the population of those tates"; and the result would be "disastrous to the world, s well as to the master and slave."[1]

Foreigners generally were unable to understand how lavery could either be the real cause of the war or be in ssue when the avowed purpose of one belligerent was to ave the Union, while that of the other was to destroy it; nd they were so uninformed as to political expediency nd the constitutional powers of the central government hat they were often resentful because the administraion did not announce a policy of emancipation. These ircumstances were very favorable to the Confederates, who could use certain half-truths so as to lead to wholly alse conclusions. On the other hand, Northerners were mazingly dull in expecting Englishmen to comprehend ithout a careful explanation that the South seceded beause the Republican victory of 1860 meant that the inerests of slavery had lost control of the government. Motley expressed the common and erroneous expecta-

[1] *American Annual Cyclopædia*, 1861, 279.

tion of his section, when, in June, 1861, he wrote: "
is impossible that so simple and noble a proposit
as this should fail to awaken the earnest sympathy
nine-tenths of the English nation."[1] But John Bri
was almost the only conspicuous political leader abr
that fully satisfied this expectation. Even Cobden
predisposed toward the Confederacy on account of
commercial policy.[2] Many others were right at tin
but they were often impatient and gave undue weigh
minor and superficial indications. The nation as a wh
at first seemed to look on with cynical neutrality, reg
ing "the greatest *war of principle*," as Motley compl
ed, as "of no more interest to her, except as it bore
the cotton question, than the wretched squabbles of M
ico or South America."[3] Although Russell was not a
voted friend of the United States, he was certainly m
less friendly toward their enemies. Most Englishm
agreed with him in the opinion that the conquest of
Confederacy would mean that the United States w
to continue to be a great slave power, whereas, in
of the success of the South there would be one sma
slave nation and one new and wholly antislavery nati

It was a very puzzling task for the governmen
the United States to counteract the erroneous co
sions of Europeans and yet not to belie the decl

[1] 1 Motley's *Correspondence*, 381.

[2] 2 Morley's *Cobden* (1881), 372, 373. [3] 1 *Correspondence*, 3

[4] "The Liberals are even more divided than the Conservatives.
those who sympathize the most with the position of the free stat
favorable to the extension of domestic slavery, are the least inc
to favor their policy of war against the slave states. . . . They
reunion of our states because they think it cannot be effected, ex
ing at the expense of principle. They favor a separation beca
would keep the free states consistent and determined enemies of sla
This is one strong form of public sentiment in Great Britain, an
force of it accounts for much of the course which has been tak
the government."—Adams to Seward, June 21, 1861. MS. arch

[5] See *ante*, p. 178.

licy of fighting merely for the Union. While it was t a little absurd to expect a moral purpose to be seen ıere none was avowed, nevertheless the administration eferred to run the risk of not winning the antislavery mpathy of Great Britain and of France rather than hazard forfeiting the physical support of many in the ɔrth and still more in the southern border states. The ɔid growth of Confederate military prestige in the ınmer of 1861 caused the question of slavery to be nost forgotten by foreigners, while the unionist policy s bringing no victories at home and was permitting e development of public opinion abroad that made ɔbable the early recognition of the Confederacy.

In September, 1861, Carl Schurz sent from Spain the st impressive warning of this danger. He said that it s a foregone conclusion that the anti-democratic gov- ıments and political parties, and the commercial and nufacturing interests depending upon cotton, were to ke sides against the North at the first favorable op- ctunity. The only statesmanlike way to prevent this uld be to win the hearty sympathy of Europeans of eral instincts and philanthropic impulses.[1] He ex- ined how difficult it was to make foreigners under- nd why "the free and prosperous North" should in- upon being associated with "the imperious and ublesome slave states," and should resort to the most ɔitrary measures of war, which seemed to be as in- sistent with the avowed spirit of American institu- ıs as they were unsuccessful in fact. He made it ar that many adverse influences were taking our se farther and farther out to sea; that even those o were naturally our friends had come to believe that ıe people of the North had set up pretensions which

[1] This is the gist of the first few paragraphs of his long and able ɔatch of September 14, 1861. Most of the remaining part is printed Rhodes, 511–13.

they had neither the courage nor the power to sus
and the failure of our first military operations was at
uted by many to a lack of moral force in our cause.'
only two ways could certain nations be prevented
taking unfriendly action: by a "great and decisive
tary success," or by such governmental measures "as
place the war against the rebellious slave states
a higher moral basis, and thereby give us the co
of public opinion in Europe." Every step taken by
government toward the abolition of slavery would
said, be equal to a victory in the field, and if we
not win the victory, it was all the more necessary t
tain its equivalent. He prophesied that if it shoul
come clear that the war was one for and against sla
public opinion would soon be so strong that no Euro
government would dare to side with the Confeder

Viewed as a problem in foreign affairs merely, th
gument was thoroughly convincing; but the main-sp
of the actual policy was the supposed domestic neces
Therefore, Seward replied in generalizations — suc
"civil war must be confined always to the existing

[1] On October 3, 1861, John Bigelow wrote to Seward: "The
sionists have found it necessary to proclaim that the Republica
no more advocates of freedom than the rebels, and that the neg
no better prospects under Lincoln than Davis. They have succ
in getting the *Times* and other prominent London and Paris jo
to take that view. The effect has been very prejudicial to our
here. M. Laboulaye puts the case as it should be, and it will
infinite good with the people of France. There is no governm
Europe that could stand a month in an alliance with the South
people could be made to understand that the issue with us was be
free and slave labor. Of this I am satisfied. Hence, I regret extr
that the good effect produced by the general tenor of Frémont's
lamation should have been impaired by irregularities or illeg
in its mode of issue, of which the government was constrained
notice. If the government can avoid expressing itself at all up
subject we can accomplish all that is necessary here by refere
the past history of the Republican party and 'the inflexible l
events.'"—Seward MSS.

ion of political forces and to the public sentiment of e whole country"; "foreign sympathy, or even foreign vor, never did and never can create or maintain any ate"; and there "is no nation on earth whose fortunes, mediate or remote, would not be the worse for the dis- ution of the American Union," and if that considera- n is not sufficient to save us from unjust intervention, en it "must come as a natural incident in our domestic ife." He had no fear that we could not "maintain rselves against all who shall combine against us"; and ere was no one at home who was not more confident the stability of the Union now than when the Minis- to Spain started on his mission.[1] Evidently the Sec- ary did not wish to discuss the question.

By the time Congress met, in December, 1861, there

[1] "DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON,
No. 35. *October* 10, 1861.
arl Schurz, Esq., etc., etc., etc.,
" Madrid:

SIR,—Your despatch of September 14th, No. 18, has been received. I have read carefully the views concerning our domestic policy ch you have submitted. Of the propriety of your submitting them e can be no question, especially when they are presented with ref- nce to the public sentiment of Europe and the possible action of governments of that continent.

It would, however, be altogether inconvenient, and it might be in e degree hazardous for me to engage in explanations of domestic cy in a correspondence which, for all practical purposes, is to be arded as involving only the foreign relations of the country. More- r, the policy with which an administration charged with the duty of ntaining itself and preserving the Union shall conduct a civil war, t be confined always to the existing condition of political forces, to the public sentiment of the whole country.

I am not surprised when you inform me that sympathies with the ted States, regarded as a nation struggling to maintain its integrity nst the assaults of faction, are less active in Europe than they ht or ought to be in view of the benefits which the republic has ady conferred, and the still greater benefits which it promises to fer, on mankind.

Nations, like individuals, are too much wrapped up in their own

was an increasing number of men eager to attack
very wherever they found it vulnerable. The Presid
annual message proposed that the government sh
pay for the liberation and colonization of negroes f
by the confiscation act and by state action. He
anxious that the conflict for "suppressing the insu
tion" should "not degenerate into a violent and rem
less revolutionary struggle." But there were n
persons without such scruples. The House refuse
reaffirm the Crittenden resolution about the pur

interests and ambitions to be deeply concerned by accidents or re
which befall other nations.

"I can well enough conceive also that the United States in th
emergency might excite more fervent sympathies abroad by av
a purpose not merely or even chiefly to maintain and preserve
existing constitutional organization, but to modify and change it
to extirpate at once an institution which is obnoxious to the en
ened censure of mankind.

"But, on the other hand, it is never to be forgotten that alth
the sympathy of other nations is eminently desirable, yet foreign
pathy, or even foreign favor, never did and never can create or
tain any state, while in every state that has the capacity to liv
love of national life is and always must be the most energetic pri
which can be invoked to preserve it from suicidal indulgence o
of faction as well as from destruction by foreign violence.

"For my own part, it seems to me very clear that there is
tion on earth whose fortunes, immediate and remote, would not
worse for the dissolution of the American Union. If that conside
shall not be sufficient to save us from unjust intervention by an
eign state or states in our domestic troubles, then that interv
must come as a natural incident in our domestic strife, and I ent
no fears that we shall not be able to maintain ourselves against a
shall combine against us.

"If it were profitable I might reply to your point that ou
suffers abroad because we do not win victories so fast as imp
friends could wish. But I have no time for such discussions
midst of daily duties and cares. It must suffice to say that rebel
at all successful, matures fast, acts by surprise, with vehement e
and wins considerable successes in the beginning. Government g
its forces more slowly and may well be content if it maintains
until the revolutionary passion submits to the inevitable law of
tion. Especially must this be so in a federate republican gover

of the war. Soon, in one or both houses, propositions were brought forward to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, to prohibit it in the territories, to prevent the military forces from returning fugitive slaves, and to extend the original confiscation act so as to include the property and slaves of all "rebels." Other antislavery ideas were advanced, and it was all but certain that most of them would be approved. In a special message, in March, 1862, Lincoln advocated governmental payment for slaves voluntarily freed by the different states. It was one of those statesmanlike half-way measures: in recognition of the great straits, it went beyond what was strictly constitutional; but it stopped far short of yielding to the revolutionary demand to strike at slavery in a spirit of impatience and resentment. It was too conservative for the abolitionists and too radical for many of the Democrats and southern Unionists. In May, 1862, General David Hunter, who was in command of the Federal troops in South Carolina, Florida, and Georgia, declared slavery and martial law to be incompatible; and, therefore, he pronounced the slaves to be forever free. This had the true ring and logic of revolution, and it pleased the daring radicals now leading northern sentiment. But Lincoln promptly revoked the order, and tried to keep action within the chosen course. This precipitated upon him and Seward—for many of the emancipationists regarded Seward as his Mephistopheles

ike our own. While you, who have gone abroad, are hearing apprehensions of the failure of the government on all sides, there is not one itizen who has remained at home who is not more confident in the tability of this Union now than he was on the day of your departure pon your mission. This confidence is not built on enthusiasm, but on nowledge of the true state of the conflict, and the exercise of calm nd dispassionate reflection.

"I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

"WILLIAM H. SEWARD."

—MS.

—the bitterest, most unreasonable, and most furi
attacks of the whole war.[1]

Meantime Seward had yielded much less than
President to the antislavery demands. On January
1862, he wrote to Adams: "Every demonstrat
against slavery puts our assured position in Maryla
Kentucky, Missouri, and Virginia at hazard, and te
to combine the revolting states in mass. With such de
onstrations being made, European states seem to th
that slavery is to be restored in its ancient strength w
the establishment of the Union. Time, if we can get
will resolve these questions."[2] This was a truth t
the abolitionists denied or disregarded. On the ot
hand, on February 17th, he undertook to meet the
sumption that the Federal government was "favoral
or at least not unfavorable, to the perpetuation of
very." He characterized it as "one of the most curi
and instructive" incidents of the war. However,
marked the despatch confidential, and neither repu
ated his unfortunate instructions of the previous A
nor removed the prohibition against discussing the qu
tion of slavery with other nations. But, by explain
the antecedents of the Republicans, by showing t
the army acted as "an emancipating crusade," and
contrasting the probable effects of a victory of one s
as opposed to that of the other, he made it plain th
although the policy of the administration was not
tinctly antislavery, the results of that policy were c
spicuously so. Moreover, the government was activ
preparing for compensated emancipation in the Dist
of Columbia.[3]

Probably it was the outbreak of angry criticism
account of the revocation of General Hunter's sweep
order that awoke in Seward a consciousness of the

[1] See *post*, pp. 361–64. [2] MS. [3] *Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 37, 3

ake of trying to avoid a question that really was very nportant to Federal interests abroad. It was not until Iay 28, 1862, that he removed the restriction against iscussing the meaning of the war in relation to slavery.[1] le merely made an *ad hominem* argument to show that was European encouragement that was prolonging the onflict; that its continuance would disorganize the so- ial system of the South and transform slave laborers into agabonds, and ultimately bring on a servile war, which ould cause great distress in some of the states of Eu- ope, and "result in an entirely new system of trade and ommerce between the United States and all foreign ations."[2] The suggestion of such possibilities was con- ucive to careful thought, and did not interfere with the omestic policy. The only mistake was that such ideas ere not expressed six or eight months earlier. Un- oubtedly the reasons were that Seward had felt con- dent that the backbone of the Confederacy would be roken in the spring or early summer of 1862, and that ttacking slavery would both interfere with the produc- on of cotton—and thereby increase the temptation for oreign intervention—and make more difficult a recon- liation between the two sections.

Slavery strewed thorns in the paths of the Confed- ate diplomatists. In the summer of 1861 Palmerston

[1] He taxes one's credulity by this explanation for avoiding the ques- n: "It was properly left out of view, so long as it might be reason- ly hoped that by the practice of magnanimity this government might ver that weakness of the insurgents without encouraging them to per- vere in their treasonable conspiracy against the Union. They have otracted the war a year, notwithstanding this forbearance of the gov- nment; and yet they persist in invoking foreign arms to end a do- stic strife, while they have forced slavery into such prominence that cannot be overlooked."—*Dip. Cor.*, 104.

[2] *Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 104, 105. This despatch was sent out as a cir- lar.

summed up the state of both British and French o
ion when he said, "We do not like slavery, but we w
cotton, and we dislike very much your Morrill tar
While the North vastly overestimated the antipathy
the South that slavery would cause among Europe
the Confederates vastly underestimated it. It took S
ard and Palmerston and others more than a yea
make even an approximately correct calculation of
importance of the question of slavery in foreign r
tions. It is not strange that Schurz and Motley
Bigelow and Adams got true reckonings much ear
Nor is it surprising that slave-holding diplomatists wo
be mole-eyed in regard to this subject. The Confeder
was crumbling into ruins before her Secretary of S
and her commissioners understood that antislavery se
ment in Europe was anything more than sheer perver
and selfishness.

The first despatch from Yancey and Mann, dated I
don, May 21, 1861, stated that "the public mind her
entirely opposed" to the Confederacy on the questio
slavery, and "the sincerity and universality of this f
ing embarrass the government in dealing with the q
tion of our recognition." Yet they were confident t
the leading public men of all parties regarded it [re
nition] as certain, unless the fortunes of war should m
independence seem hopeless. On June 1st the com
sioners further reported: "The antislavery sentimen
weak, and not active in Paris." Slidell mentioned
his first despatch from the French capital, February
1862, that one often heard regret expressed that sla
existed in the Confederacy, and a hope for its ultim
but gradual extinction; yet nothing was said offensiv
and he found it easy to divert the conversation to n
agreeable topics. He thought the antislavery fee
in the abstract quite as general there as in Engl
but there was no considerable class that believed the

istence of the institution would affect the action of the Emperor and his Cabinet, who were supposed to be quite indifferent to the subject. There was a very marked difference between this report and the one Weed made to Seward about three weeks earlier.[1] Slidell's prejudices shut out the light.

After 1861 there were numerous and wide-spread rumors in both England and France that the Confederate diplomatists were prepared to make concessions to the objections of Europeans to slavery. It was reported very soon after Mason and Slidell reached London that they had asked for British recognition of their government, and had accompanied the request with a promise of ultimate emancipation.[2] The father of this political gossip, as Adams explained,[3] was the wish, on the part of Confederate sympathizers, that some such plea might be urged so as to check the growing antislavery feeling. But before 1865 it would have been impossible to make emancipation a part of the Confederate programme. Nor did more than a very few of the Southerners dream, until it was too late, that such a course would be necessary. Even by November 4, 1862, Mason had not discovered more than that "when, after recognition," he should attempt to negotiate a treaty of amity and commerce, Great Britain would demand, as a *sine qua non*,

[1] 3 Seward, 57.

[2] The *Spectator*, of January 25, 1862, said: "It is understood, in that indirect but accurate way in which great facts first get abroad, that the Confederacy has offered England and France a price for active support. It is nothing less than a treaty securing free-trade in its broadest sense for fifty years, the complete suppression of the importation of slaves, and the emancipation of every negro born after the date of the signature of the treaty. In return they ask—first, the recognition of their independence; and, secondly, such an investigation into the facts of the blockade, as must, in their judgment, lead to its disavowal." See also 3 Seward, 58, 62.

[3] *Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 16.

a clause against the African slave-trade. This was l
than it would have been to exact a pledge for emanci
tion to take effect a century or two in the future, for t
African slave-trade was prohibited by the Confeder
Constitution. Yet Mason told his English friends th
if such a requirement as he mentioned should be
manded, a treaty would be impossible. After consul
tion with Davis, Benjamin gave instructions, Janua
15, 1863, that if the provision in the Constitution w
not sufficient, the negotiations should be transferred
Richmond, and if the British representative should s
persist, "that haughty government will find to its s
prise that it needs a treaty of commerce with us mu
more than we need it with Great Britain."[1] Meanti
a new and aggressive policy had been adopted by t
United States.

After the spring of 1862, Lincoln saw that he m
yield more to the antislavery men or incur their hos
ity. He believed that state emancipation with comp
sation from the central government would be the saf
and most practicable way to shatter the foundation
the Confederacy. Would not a proclamation declari
free all the slaves in states and districts in insurrecti
show loyal slave-holders that slavery was doome
Could they still refuse to accept compensation for pr
erty that would otherwise be lost? He thought th
they could not,—forgetting, as Wendell Phillips sa
that men argue with their prejudices, not with th
reason.

On July 13th Lincoln informed Secretaries Sew
and Welles of his intention to issue a proclamation
emancipation. This was his first intimation of a ra

[1] Both communications are printed in full in an article by J
Bigelow in the *Century Magazine*, May, 1891, pp. 115, 120.

cal change from his previous policy. Seward was so surprised that he did not feel prepared to express a decisive opinion on the subject.[1] On the next day Lincoln made one more effort to induce Congress to accept his plan of compensated emancipation, and he sent a draft of a bill that he desired to have passed. Seward immediately forwarded copies of the message and of the bill to all the United States Ministers in Europe, saying that "there is no reasonable doubt that the policy involved cannot be long in winning the favor of the country, and in assuring the stability of the Union."[2]

On July 21st and 22d, the President laid before his Cabinet different questions concerning a more aggressive war policy. Among other points, all agreed that it would be well to permit the use of negroes as military laborers; but Lincoln was unwilling that they should be enlisted as soldiers, as General Hunter had recommended. Lincoln also informed the Cabinet of his decision to issue a proclamation announcing his intention to declare free the slaves of those that were in rebellion.

Seward saw no objection to granting General Hunter's request,[3] but he had very decided fears and objections in relation to a proclamation, at this time, regarding emancipation. Stanton's memorandum of July 22d says:

"Seward argues: That foreign nations will intervene to prevent the abolition of slavery for the sake of cotton. Argues in a long speech against its immediate promulgation. Wants to wait for troops. Wants Halleck here. Wants drum and fife and public spirit. We break up our relations with foreign nations and the production of cotton for sixty years."[4]

[1] Welles's diary, quoted 6 Nicolay and Hay, 122.
[2] *Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 135.
[3] 6 Nicolay and Hay, 124.
[4] Quoted 6 Nicolay and Hay, 128.

F. B. Carpenter, who painted the famous picture of t
President and his Cabinet at this time, quotes Lincoln
repeating Seward's language as follows:

"'"It may be viewed as the last measure of an exhaust
government, a cry for help; the government stretchi
forth her hands to Ethiopia, instead of Ethiopia stretchi
forth her hands to the government." His idea,' said t
President, 'was that it would be considered our l
shriek on the retreat.' This was his precise expressi
'"Now," continued Mr. Seward, "while I approve t
measure, I suggest, Sir, that you postpone its issue un
you can give it to the country supported by military s
cess, instead of issuing it, as would be the case now, up
the greatest disasters of the war."'"'[1]

The aim that was uppermost in Seward's mind
this time was to ward off European interference by p
suading Great Britain and France that the sufferi
caused by the lack of cotton would not continue lo
if these powers should cease giving encouragement
the Confederacy. More than once he had recen
warned them that otherwise a servile insurrection, an
consequent cessation in the production of cotton, wo
result from the prolongation of the war. It alarm
Seward to think that the course proposed might put
end to the extensive slave-labor in the Confederacy, a
perhaps bring on a negro insurrection—either of wh
could have been used as a plausible excuse for interv
tion. As Secretary of State it was natural that
should regard the foreign relations of the country
then so critical—as of first importance. He was a
very impatient with what he regarded as an irratio
clamor for making emancipation, instead of national

[1] 2 Lincoln's *Works*, 479. It has too often been assumed that
statement was full and precise, although Lincoln made it in Febru
1864. Carpenter's recollections of Lincoln's recollections are inte
ing as corroborative evidence, but they should not control as aga
Stanton's memorandum or Seward's opinions expressed at other ti

grity, the object of the war. Just a week after this abinet discussion of July 22d, Seward explained in a letr to his wife how a proclamation of emancipation would hen do no good, but much harm, and added: "Proclaations are *paper*, without the support of armies. It is ournful to see that a great nation shrinks from a war has accepted, and insists on adopting proclamations, hen it is asked for force. The Chinese do it without ccess."[1] For several weeks, at least, he continued to e opposed to the plan decided upon, and felt a lingerg contempt for what must have seemed to him like travagant buncombe. This is shown in his sarcastic mark to the Secretary of the Treasury early in Sepmber: "He said," Chase records in his diary, "some e had proposed that the President should issue a procmation, on the [expected] invasion of Pennsylvania y Lee], freeing all the apprentices of that state, or ith some similar object." No wonder Chase thought he jest ill-timed."[2] A Washington despatch in the ew York *Times* of September 27, 1862, said: "Secrery Seward has all along been known to be unfavorable the act [of proclaiming emancipation], though not as tspoken in his opposition as Secretary Blair."

It was another illustration of Seward's readiness that, hough he was opposed to the general plan, some of s ideas should be accepted as very important. Lincoln nerously gave him full credit for the suggestion that e proclamation should be "borne on the bayonets of advancing army, not dragged in the dust behind a reating one."[3] So the draft was laid aside to await e first victory, which was always expected soon.

[1] 3 Seward, 118.

[2] Warden's *Chase*, 471, 475.

[3] Carpenter, 22; 3 Seward, 118. Lincoln himself, a little later, oddly pressed a similar thought: "I do not want to issue a document t the whole world will see must necessarily be inoperative, like the pe's bull against the comet."—6 Nicolay and Hay, 155.

Contrary to what has heretofore been believed, Sew was so fearful of the effects of the prospective pro mation that he carefully questioned perhaps the authority in Europe, evidently expecting to obtain in mation with which to reinforce his own objections. a "private" despatch of July 24th he put this search question to Motley: "Are you sure that to-day, un the seductions and pressure which could be applie some European populations [powers?], they would rise up and resist our attempt to bestow freedom u the laborers whose capacity to supply cotton and c a market for European fabrics depends, or is though depend, upon their continuance in bondage?"[1] Mot answer, beginning with "a thousand times NO,"[2] n have been a great surprise, for it gave new life and f to what the most intelligent representatives of the U ed States in Europe had been saying, for nearly a y about an unequivocal antislavery policy.

At home, too, the tide continued to rise. George B croft wrote a private note from Newport, August 1862, containing these two sentences of warning: "I you at Washington aware how fast and how far pu opinion has traveled on the subject of emancipat The people are nearly unanimous now."[3]

The victory at Antietam furnished an opportunity issuing the preliminary proclamation of emancipa When the draft was read to the Cabinet, the Presi said that his mind was made up except as to m points. Again Seward's mental alertness was cons ous. He seems to have made the only suggestions were considered important and acceptable. He posed that the proclamation be strengthened by a pl to "maintain" the freedom it proclaimed, and that

[1] MS. archives.
[2] Motley to Seward, August 26, 1862. Seward MSS.
[3] Seward MSS.

olonization of negroes should be voluntary on their art.[1] The published document, dated September 22, 862, announced the President's intention to continue o urge compensated abolition and voluntary colonizaion; it threatened emancipation in all the states still n rebellion on January 1, 1863, and promised to recmmend to Congress that all persons that had remained oyal throughout the rebellion should be paid for losses f property and slaves.

Seward immediately sent a circular despatch, with a opy of the proclamation, to all the diplomatic and conular officers of the United States in foreign countries. n his instructions to Adams, September 26th, there was very forcible and statesmanlike summary of the logic f what had been, and was to be, done. The emancipaon of the slaves, he said,

> could be effected only by executive authority, and on the round of military necessity. As a preliminary to the exercise f that great power, the President must have not only the xigency, but the general consent of the loyal people of the nion in the border slave states, where the war was raging, s well as in the free states which have escaped the scourge, hich could only be obtained through a clear conviction on heir part that the military exigency had actually occurred. is thus seen that what has been discussed so earnestly at ome and abroad as a question of morals, or of humanity, as all the while been practically only a military question, epending on time and circumstances. The order for emanpation, to take effect on the first of January, in the states ien still remaining in rebellion against the Union, was sued upon due deliberation and conscientious considerapon of the actual condition of the war, and the state of pinion in the whole country.
>
> "No one who knows how slavery was engrafted upon the ation when it was springing up into existence; how it has rown and gained strength as the nation itself has advanced wealth and power; how fearful the people have hitherto een of any change which might disturb the parasite,

[1] Warden's *Chase*, 482.

will contend that the order comes too late. It is hoped
believed that after the painful experience we have ha
the danger to which the Federal connection with slaver
exposing the republic there will be few indeed who wil
sist that the decree which brings the connection to an
either could or ought to have been further deferred.

"The interests of humanity have now become identi
with the cause of our country, and this has resulted
from any infraction of constitutional restraints by the
ernment, but from persistent unconstitutional and fact
proceedings of the insurgents, who have opposed th
selves to both."[1]

A letter of about the same date, written to his daugh
gives this interesting bit of comment on the procla
tion and on himself:

"It is now evident that the proceeding has not
delayed too long. In a short time we shall know whe
it has come too soon. I hope that this may not prove t
the case. I was fearful of prematurely giving to a pe
prone to divide, occasion for organizing parties, in a c
that demands union and harmony, in order to save
country from destruction.

"Having for twenty years warned the people of the c
ing of this crisis, and suffered all the punishment
could inflict upon me for my foresight and fidelity, I
not displeased with the position in which I find my
now—of one who has not put forth a violent hand to ve
my own predictions."[2]

The administration's attitude against slavery gave
an opportunity to send to Dayton, October 20, 1862,
eloquent and impressive, although oratorical, warn
against European interference:

"Are the enlightened and humane nations, Great Bri
and France, to throw their protection over the insurg
now? Are they to enter, directly or indirectly, into
conflict, which, besides being exclusively one belongin
the friendly people of a distant continent, has also, by f

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 202. [2] 3 Seward, 135.

f circumstances, become a war between freedom and human ondage? Will they interfere to strike down the arm that o reluctantly, but so effectually, is raised at last to break he fetters of the slave, and seek to rivet anew the chains hich he has sundered? Has this purpose, strange and ntried, entered into the counsels of those who are said to' ave concluded that it is their duty to recognize the in- urgents? If so, have they considered, further, that rec- gnition must fail without intervention; that intervention ill be ineffectual unless attended by permanent and per- sting armies, and that they are committing themselves to aintain slavery in that manner among a people where aves and masters alike agree in the resolution that it shall o longer exist? Is this to be the climax of the world's rogress in the nineteenth century?"[1]

Lincoln's letter of August 22, 1862, to Horace Greeley, eclared: "My paramount object in this struggle is to ave the Union, and is not either to save or to destroy avery. If I could save the Union without freeing any ave, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing all e slaves, I would do it; and if I could save it by free- g some and leaving others alone, I would also do that."[2] fter such a candid statement it would have been very allow hypocrisy for the President to pretend to act like abolitionist. But, of course, the abolitionists both America and in Europe quickly claimed more than as true; while the English friends of the South viewed e preliminary proclamation in a very unsentimental anner. The London *Spectator* of October 11, 1862, id: "The government liberates the enemy's slaves as would the enemy's cattle, simply to weaken them in e coming conflict. . . . The principle is not that a hu- an being cannot justly own another, but that he can- t own him unless he is loyal to the United States." It w the real reason of the act, and warned Americans not wonder if the imagination of Europeans was not stirred,

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 398.

[2] 2 Lincoln's *Works*, 227.

or if they were not convinced that the system of sla
had been brought to an end. The *Saturday Revie*
the same date, in an article entitled "President Linc
Coup d'État," said that the proclamation would
been a crime, even if it had been strictly legal. "
President has virtually acknowledged his military
ure, and his desperate efforts to procure military
port will probably precipitate the ruin of his cause."

As Seward had foretold, the real danger of an ant
very policy was not in the direct effect upon Euro
public opinion, but in the inferences that Europe w
draw in case the administration should seem to
power at home. It is certain that the Republicans
suffer in the elections of 1862 on account of the pr
mation; and doubtless Napoleon's actions, already
ticed, were somewhat influenced in consequence.
what had been overlooked too long was the fact tha
Europeans held antislavery convictions, and were
to see, sooner or later, that antislavery acts, altho
prompted solely by military or political considerat
were very desirable.[1] On October 10th Bigelow w
saying: "France is unanimously for emancipation,
our cause will now daily grow in grace here as it g
in age."[2] Dayton thought the proclamation might h
bad effect at first, because of fear lest the productio
cotton should be interfered with; but he was confi
that in the end it would "commend itself to the
lightened conscience of the Christian world."[3] But
most significant report was that from Adams, No
ber 15th, saying that efforts were making in Londo
organize the antislavery sentiment in our interest.[4]

Before the proclamation of emancipation was iss

[1] Weed wrote from Paris, January 26, 1862: "If ours was avo
a war of emancipation, this government would sympathize w
and aid us."—3 Seward, 57.

[2] Seward MSS.

[3] *Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 394.

[4] *Dip. Cor.*, 186

anuary 1, 1863, emancipation societies were forming in
ngland; and by the time it had crossed the Atlantic
ll intelligent Englishmen were beginning to gain cor-
ect knowledge as to the cause of the war. January
ad not passed before the first waves of the antisla-
ery storm in America were felt. In a few weeks more,
nglish public opinion showed a surprising awakening.
reat public meetings were held in the large cities,
nd famous speakers addressed audiences infused with
ie ardor and courage peculiar to national reform move-
ents. The mass of laborers in mines and factories rap-
lly developed a bitter prejudice against the Confed-
racy. Impressive antislavery resolutions were passed
nanimously, and addresses of congratulation were sent
) the President of the United States. As Cobden wrote
) Sumner, these remarkable demonstrations of sym-
athy for the cause of freedom "closed the mouths of
ose who have been advocating the side of the South."[1]
he friends of the North felt thenceforth that they had
cause to plead.

The response from France was less impressive—for the
econd Empire was unfavorable to the expression of
ublic opinion—but it left the Confederacy no room
) expect popular sympathy. Before the middle of Feb-
ary, 1863, seven hundred and fifty "Protestant pastors
f France of every denomination" issued an address to
ie pastors and ministers of all evangelical denominations
Great Britain, asking them to lead and to "stir up
together a great and peaceful demonstration of sym-
athy for the black race"[2]—which meant to give the
orth all possible moral support. "An antislavery Con-
rence of Ministers of Religion" was held in Manchester
rly in June, 1863. The British reply to the French
astors was signed by three thousand nine hundred and

[1] 2 Morley, 406.

[2] 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1863, 646.

ninety-seven clergymen.[1] Before the end of June most reliable authority on this question made it c that all France was awake—from the unscrupu Napoleon III. to the most honest peasant. Edwi Leon, the head of the Confederate press-agency France, reported to Benjamin that men "connected v the government and enjoying the confidence of the peror," had often told him that France could not "t the lead in acknowledging the Southern Confeder without some promise for prospective emancipati He called "the old cry of slavery" "the real *bête n* of the French imagination," and more of a stumbl block to recognition in France than in England.[2]

By the summer of 1863 the utter hopelessness of taining recognition from Great Britain had becom manifest that on August 4th it was decided to b Mason's mission to an end. From Paris he contin to keep up personal relations with some English syn thizers with the Confederacy. A Southern Indep ence Association was formed by the sanguine, but t felt compelled to promise to work for the extinctio slavery. The Confederates bewailed this as a fratric blow. Finally, in January, 1864, Mason concluded there was no human influence that could touch men had gone so far as to allow "the so-called antisla feeling" to become "a 'sentiment' akin to patriotis who declined to accept his assurances that, after i pendence, when they came to know "the true condi of African servitude with us," "the film would fall f their eyes," and that meantime the Confederates o to be regarded as the best judges of their own need

Even Secretary Benjamin now realized that the boasted "corner-stone" had become a mill-stone a

[1] *Address of the French Protestant Pastors, etc.*, 30.
[2] *Century*, May, 1891, 118. [3] *Century*, May, 1891, 1

the neck of the Confederacy. With apparent amazement, he stated that the first political writers of France employed abolition sentiments as if they were "philosophical axioms too self-evident to require comment"; they assumed that there was "nothing within the range of possibility except the subjugation of the South and the emancipation of the whole body of negroes." Napoleon favored recognition and peace, he believed; but what could he do "in direct contravention of the settled opinion of the people while hampered by the opposition of the English government"?[1]

It cannot be said, even as a figure of speech, that slavery was the cause of the death of the Confederacy, as it surely was of its birth; but after Lincoln's policy of emancipation was understood abroad nothing but great victories and positive evidences of increasing strength could have established Confederate independence. In fact, the new government was a scuttled ship, held back by a dragging anchor.

Probably another reason why Seward was not at first in sympathy with the aggressive antislavery movement was that he expected very important results from a treaty for the suppression of the slave-trade which he negotiated with Great Britain. In a long and elaborate letter of October 17, 1861,[2] John Jay made many suggestions to Seward as to the importance of taking immediate steps to negotiate a treaty with foreign powers for the suppression of the slave-trade. Neither England nor France could well refuse such an offer, he said; if they should accede, they would acknowledge the integrity of the United States government and make it more difficult to recognize the Confederacy on account of any temporary success. Such an attempt would show the

[1] *Century*, May, 1891, 122.

[2] Seward MSS.

true sentiments of the United States and tend to eff
the unfavorable impression made in Europe by the
turn of fugitive slaves and the repudiation of Frémo
proclamation. A treaty of that kind would render nu
tory the southern aim to revive the slave-trade, an
might make it impossible for any European power
recognize the Confederacy if it did not give its adhes
to the treaty itself. And the United States could f
themselves from the suspicion that they were encou
ing the trade by too strict a refusal to permit visitat
in time of peace, if they would assent for a limited
riod to the mutual privilege of visitation within cert
lines of latitude and longitude. The suggestion was
tainly a sagacious one, and it just suited the peculiar
cumstances in which Seward was placed. It gave h
an antislavery cause of his own to champion.

The antislave-trade treaty was negotiated by Sew
and Lord Lyons in April, 1862, and was subsequen
ratified. It provided that the officers of specially
structed ships of the British and of the United Sta
navies might visit such merchant vessels of the two
tions as were under reasonable suspicion of being
gaged in the African slave-trade. The right of sea
was to be exercised by vessels of war, and only wit
the distance of two hundred miles from the coast
Africa, and to the southward of 32° north latitude,
within thirty leagues of the coast of Cuba; and the
ficer making the search must declare that his sole ob
was to ascertain if the vessel was engaged in the Afri
slave-trade. Provision was made for three mixed co
—at Sierra Leone, at the Cape of Good Hope, and at N
York.

It is said that when Sumner brought to the Dep
ment of State the news of the ratification of the tre
without dissent, Seward leaped from the lounge
which he had been resting, and exclaimed: "Good G

e Democrats have disappeared. This is the greatest t of the administration."[1] In letters of this time he rote: "God be praised! We have got through the nate a treaty that will destroy the slave-trade." "If have done nothing else worthy of self-congratulation, deem this treaty sufficient to have lived for."[2]

Unforeseen circumstances prevented the treaty from suming any such importance as had been expected. hen the Secretary of State called upon the Secretary the Navy to carry out the stipulations, he was in- rmed that it would be impossible during the war detail any vessel with specific instructions, for that ould be a *pro tanto* locking-up of a portion of the vy, when every ship was needed for the blockade for independent cruising.[3] Subsequently it was ar- nged that the special instructions should not derogate om the belligerent rights of search. Welles resented hat Seward had done, yet this statement as to the re- lt is deemed to be true: "But, in point of fact, I lieve not a single capture was made; the African ve-trade had ceased, and the cumbrous and expen- ve machinery of mixed courts . . . was never put in eration."[4]

One of the strangest incidents of the slavery question s the conversion of the Republican party to the plan colonizing free negroes in some foreign country. Lin- ln's birth in a slave state, and his life-long association th settlers from the South, made it natural that he ould be skeptical about the possibility of the black d the white races living together in political equality. herefore he, like Clay and nearly all southern Whigs an earlier time, believed that the deportation of the

[1] 4 Pierce's *Sumner*, 68.
[2] 3 Seward, 88, 85.
[3] Welles's *Lincoln and Seward*, 134.
[4] Welles, 144.

freedmen to some tropical country would be both p
ticable and necessary. Next to compensated eman
tion, this was one of his favorite ideas. On the o
hand, Seward's early associations with the abolitio
of New York and of New England, who had long s
pronounced colonization an impossibility, caused hi
look with disfavor on such a proposition.[1] Neverthe
it was his duty to contribute what he could to th
periment.

The preliminary proclamation of emancipation r
it urgent for the administration to have an answe
this question: What is to become of the negroes tha
the hundred thousand are gaining freedom? Con
sional support of a plan of colonization was alr
assured. Lincoln called for the opinions of the r
bers of the Cabinet. Attorney-General Bates answ
at length, September 25, 1862, favoring "the prop
of seeking to make treaties with the American go
ments within the tropics, and with the European po
which have colonies within the tropics, with a vie
obtaining safe and convenient places of refuge fo
free colored population of this country"—those alr
free and those that might become so by the opera
of the war.[2] In a circular despatch of Septembe
1862, to the United States Ministers at London, F
The Hague, and Copenhagen, Seward stated the
of the government. The first point was that em
tion should be voluntary. The other stipulations re

[1] "Seward, to whom the subject was not a new one, had n
in their [the different schemes of colonization] success, and
tained grave doubts of their wisdom. He did not believe th
colored people would be willing to go to distant lands. He th
the United States offered a better field for their labor, and q
much probability of contentment and happiness as they woul
anywhere in the world. 'I am always for bringing men and
into the Union,' he said, 'never for taking any *out*.'"—3 Sewar

[2] A copy of the memorandum is in the Seward MSS.

hiefly to the welfare and the treatment of the emi-rants after becoming residents of the new state. Lord Russell declined the proposition of the United States as o the British West Indies, and no one of the other re-lies was satisfactory. On November 18, 1862, Seward gain wrote to Adams, as follows:

"While some of them [the projects from foreign coun-ries] are thus ascertained to be impracticable, it may be oped, nevertheless, that we are drawing near to the dis-overy of a feasible policy which will solve, perhaps, the ost difficult political problem that has occurred in the rogress of civilization on the American continent."

Unfortunately the discovery was never made. The rojects that seemed least impracticable were to settle olonies on lands near the harbor of Chiriqui, in the tate of Panama, New Granada, and on Île à Vache, be-onging to Haiti. A little inquiry caused a doubt as to he title to Chiriqui, but left no doubt that the district as wholly unsuited to the purpose. By special ar-angement and under the protection of the administra-on, nearly five hundred negroes sailed for Île à Vache, April, 1863. The dream came to a sad end: within few months the colonists were overtaken by hunger nd sickness, so that a large proportion of them died. Within eleven months from the time the hapless ex-edition sailed, the government had to bring back the rvivors, or they, too, would soon have perished.[1]

Seward's attitude toward slavery was due to his con-nued belief that the chief business of the administra-on was to restore the Union, and that any attempt to ake emancipation a leading aim—unless a clear major-y of the loyal voters demanded it—would be hazardous

[1] The particulars of the whole question of colonization are given in Nicolay and Hay, 354–67.

and unwise. Being convinced that the election of L
coln had sounded the death-knell of slavery as a po
in national politics, and that the war was inevita
antislavery in its effects, he was confident that the
stitution would rapidly decline in strength, even w
out being made the object of Federal attack.[1] '
position was true and statesmanlike, although milit
failures, the rapid growth of the power of the radic
and the interests of the United States abroad compe
him to yield to the new and rapidly changing conditi

[1] Carpenter's *Six Months in the White House*, 72; 1 Dicey's *Fe*
States, 232–34.

CHAPTER XXXVII

SOME MISCELLANEOUS ACTIVITIES AND TRIALS

Seward was an eccentric and many-sided political enius. He illustrated Mirabeau's theory that "Jacoins that are ministers will not be Jacobin ministers." efore December, 1860, he had been chief of the radials, and his ambition had been primarily personal and artisan. Since the summer of 1861 probably no public an of the time had been governed by more patriotic npulses. Yet he desired as ardently as ever to be mas-r of affairs, and it is doubtful if it ever occurred to im that he could not best perform any task falling to ne President or to any member of the Cabinet. When yrus W. Field sent him a letter of condolence on his efeat at Chicago, he wrote: "If the alternative were esented to a wise man, he might well seek rather to ave his countrymen regret that he had not been Presint than to be President."[1] Seward aimed to show such ilities in saving the Union—notwithstanding popular unders, sectional disloyalty, and the malice of factions -that the mistake at Chicago should become apparent all. Although his patriotism was egotistical, it was sentially unselfish. Here we have the main-spring of s incessant activity.

From the beginning he was much more than Secretary State. Either with or without formal approval he sumed scores of tasks that naturally belonged to other

[1] Judson's *Field*, 127.

departments. To him, and often to Lincoln and to p
ical leaders in the East, this seemed a matter of cou
He acted as the President's agent in calling the m
ings of the Cabinet and in looking after the perfo
ance of numerous acts that needed to be done quic
In two sentences, one in a letter written in the sprin
1861, and the other a year later, he gives an almost
fect description of what he conceived to be his im
tance in the administration: "I am counseling with
Cabinet one hour, with the Army officers the next,
Navy next, and I visit all the troops as fast as t
come." "I dare not, because I cannot safely, l
this post from which all supplies, all directions, al
quiries must radiate, to armies and navies at home
to legations abroad."[1] He was fond of mentionin
friends and callers how busy he was, and how m
irons he had in the fire. His son quotes him as say
occasionally: "I am sure I am the senior of som
my colleagues, but they seem to think I am the youn
member of the Cabinet. When there is some one t
seen, some place to be visited, or some journey t
made, they seem to think it easier for me to go
for anybody else."[2] It was true; and Seward was
the one to conceal the fact.

At first no one of Seward's colleagues stood so
to him as Simon Cameron. It was not supposed
Lincoln's first Secretary of War had any special fit
for the duties that were severe enough to employ
energies of ten able men. Yet during most of
time the cause of the Union depended upon the e
prise, expedition, and spirit of the War Departm
Seward's subtle influence with Scott, the military
of the army for several months after the war be
made it easy for him to keep abreast of the lea

[1] 2 Seward, 586; 3 Seward, 72. [2] 2 Seward, 6

lans in that department. After the call to arms he as most ready and resourceful in suggesting how the oops and munitions of war, especially from New York, hould be hurried forward; in fact, he seems to have elped the military organization whenever he had an pportunity. The man that had led so many political ampaigns knew the importance of popular enthusiasm. t early became Seward's favorite recreation to drive o the neighboring fortifications and camps, in which e always found old friends and gave encouragement o the soldiers. More than once he visited the armies n the field. He was happiest when he appeared with he President, either on such occasions or when reviewng troops passing through Washington. This occurred o often that Seward's enemies began to ask sarcastically hether he was head of the army or only general manger of the whole administration.

It was one of the best phases of his activity that it as never merely meddlesome; he did not bewail the istakes of others; he let the past go, and was eager -too eager, perhaps—to influence the present and the ture. But he had the virtue to meet every military everse with equanimity, and to be willing to give his hole time and energy to help reorganize and strengthen he shattered forces. The evidence of an impartial Engsh traveler[1] is not necessary to convince us that, after he fall of Fort Sumter, Seward was among the first o recognize that the North was in earnest, and needed he most vigorous measures, and that that was why incoln showed so much confidence in him at critical mes.

The numerous battles in different parts of Virginia nce the beginning of the spring campaign of 1862 had dly depleted the Federal forces. In June, several days

[1] 1 Dicey's *Federal States*, 229.

before McClellan's campaign in the Peninsula had end
Seward suggested that new enlistments be called for
the people should realize the extent of the disasters.
plan was heartily approved by Lincoln and Edwin
Stanton, who, in January, 1862, had succeeded Camer
Seward first induced several of the New York Re
sentatives to go home and arouse their constitue
then he went to New York city to confer with
Union Defence Committees and to communicate
telegraph with the governors of the loyal states. I
known, moreover, that he caused a great Union m
ing to be called in Springfield, Massachusetts;[1] an
is probable that he made many similar suggestions
to other localities.

The President feared to issue a proclamation les
might create a panic; but how, otherwise, could a h
dred thousand new soldiers be obtained? Seward w
master of political strategy, and Lincoln was no no
Here is the device; it was chiefly Seward's.[2] Lin
gave Seward a confidential letter to be shown for eff
it explained the danger of the situation by saying that
Confederates had concentrated so many of their tr
about Richmond that it would be easy for them t
tack Washington, unless the Federal army in the
should be strengthened. It had been expected that
would suffice to induce the governors to send forw
reinforcements. But Seward found that recruiting
ceased and that a direct official appeal to the gover
would be necessary. So he drafted a circular, inco
rating the suggestions of the confidential letter and

[1] "Upon your suggestion the other day," George Ashmun wr
the Secretary, July 6, 1862, "I set on foot a call for a public m
on the 4th, which was most successfully and happily responde
It was the largest political meeting ever held under a roof i
region, and the manifestation was most gratifying."—Seward M

[2] 3 Seward, 100–110, gives a full account, with the document

g for one hundred and fifty thousand men, and tele-
aphed it to Washington for the President's approval.
little later he concluded that it would be better if the
vernors, instead of the President, appeared to take
e initiative; and immediately he drew up a petition, to
signed by the loyal governors, expressing a "hearty
sire that the recent successes [!] of the Federal army
ay be followed up by measures which must insure the
eedy restoration of the Union," and requesting, "if it
eets your [Lincoln's] entire approval," that the Pres-
ent should call upon the states for such additional
mbers of men as might be "necessary to garrison
d hold all of the numerous cities and military posi-
ns that have been captured by our armies, and to
eedily crush the rebellion." This and the prepared re-
y, complying with the request, were also telegraphed
the President, and were promptly approved. By
ward's urgent request Stanton agreed to go beyond
lawful authority and advance to each recruit one-
rth of the one-hundred-dollar bounty, so as to en-
rage enlistments. In less than a week from the
ne Seward took up the task, he had obtained the sup-
rt of all the governors of the loyal states, with one
two exceptions; three hundred thousand men—in-
ad of half or one-third of that number, as was origi-
ly intended—had been called for, and the correspond-
ce was published in the newspapers July 2d,[1] before
country knew just what McClellan's fate had been.
e alarm and anger of the North were great, but the
spects of having large reinforcements saved the ad-
nistration from serious embarrassments. It is doubt-
if any one except Seward could have accomplished
s remarkable feat so speedily and so successfully.
n time of war much of the general policy and many

[1] 6 Nicolay and Hay, 118.

of the special undertakings of the Navy Depart
touch the interests of other nations, and therefor
Secretary of State is likely to be called upon to ex
them or to cause any objectionable features to be cha
Gideon Welles and Seward were men of very diff
antecedents, associations, and tendencies. Welles
been a Jacksonian Democrat and a journalist—a
of little experience in public life outside of Con
cut and of not much within that state. He belong
the New England school of anti-Seward Republ
most of whom had left the Democracy on accou
slavery. His integrity and intentions were of the
but his ability was mediocre. He had but slight k
edge of naval affairs, and even less of internation
lations. From the beginning of the administrati
the end of the war the chiefs of the two departm
were generally on opposite sides if there was a di
in the Cabinet. Welles favored closing the ports; Se
preferred a blockade, and had his way. Welles w
the Mason-and-Slidell firebrand; Seward threw it
board, but none too soon. The Secretary of the
naturally wanted to attack as soon as possible, so
weaken the enemy; the Secretary of State natu
deprecated acts likely to injure the rights or call
the displeasure of foreign governments. As has
noticed, Seward often took it for granted that wha
important and needed to be done quickly must
rected by himself. Excepting the Fort Sumter an
Fort Pickens expeditions, the departmental di
tesies of which Welles complained seem to hav
some relation to the duties of the Secretary of
and they resulted in nothing very serious; how
this may have been due principally to Welles's
tests and to Lincoln's increased care in examining
ard's proposals relating to the Navy Department.
ground for just criticism was not Seward's motiv

is methods. He usually chose the way that would most likely be free from obstacles to the accomplishment of his purposes, and surest to create ill-feeling and disorder in administration. His intentions, except possibly in regard to Fort Sumter, were thoroughly patriotic; but it was too much to expect the Secretary of the Navy and his friends to accept that as an excuse.[1]

In giving clearances to vessels and in regard to some other functions of the Treasury Department that affected foreign relations, Chase appears to have accepted the suggestions of the Secretary of State. Chase's prominence and his militant anti-Seward followers were a warning against encroachments. In the Department of Justice there was much less danger. The following unpublished letter from the Attorney-General to the Secretary of State explains itself:

"Attorney-General's Office, *September* 23, 1861.

Hon. Wm. H. Seward, Secretary of State:

"Sir,—I regret to find in the newspapers a document bearing date September 21, '61, purporting to be a circular letter of instructions from you to the marshals and district attorneys of the United States, as to the manner of discharging their respective duties under recent acts of Congress.

"I apprehend that there must be some mistake in this matter; for, if not, there is danger that great inconvenience may result both to the officers instructed and to the public service. The officers may be embarrassed by discrepant instructions from different sources, and the service may suffer from lack of regularity and uniformity in the action of the officers.

"I beg to draw your attention to the act of Congress of August 2, 1861, whereby it is declared 'that the Attorney-General of the United States be, and he is hereby, charged with the general superintendence and direction of the

[1] The relations between the two Secretaries are described in Welles's *Lincoln and Seward, passim.*

attorneys and the marshals of all the districts in the Un
States and Territories, and as to the manner of dischar
their respective duties.'

"I have the honor to be, with the greatest respect,

"Your obedient servant,

"EDWARD BATES.

Seward's manner of filling the offices that came wi
the field of his political influence did not tend to m
the party more harmonious. Lincoln early advised W
and Seward that fairness to all was to be the rule o
administration in distributing the spoils. The Presi
himself gave so much time to hearing applicants, e
cially from the West, that several of the eastern lea
became very indignant. Lincoln seems to have tre
Seward with much consideration.[2] To agree upon
for numerous positions in New York, Seward inv
the President and Senators Harris and Preston Kin
a consultation at the Department of State. Lin
brought the Secretary of the Navy. Welles's acc
of the meeting represents Seward as desiring to pro
in a very summary manner, and to send to the Se
the names of persons that were to be subordinate
other Secretaries, without consulting those Secreta
Lincoln vetoed this part of the programme.[3]

[1] Seward MSS. No trace of any reply or explanation on Sew
part has been found.

[2] 2 Lincoln's *Works*, 24, 43. Mrs. Lincoln wrote to the Secre
March 22, 1861, requesting that the consulship at Honolulu be
to a certain person.—Seward MSS.

[3] Welles, 71–73. The following letter from Chase to Seward is
much to the point, and probably refers to the conference ment
above:

"TREASURY DEPARTMENT, *March* 27, 18

"MY DEAR SIR, — The appraisership at New York is va
Which of the applicants do you prefer?

"Day before yesterday you said to me in reference to the ma
ship of the western district of New York, 'Insist on your brothe
replied that the Attorney-General would, as I understood, non

Of course the Post Office Department was the great field for the struggle of spoils. Although a conservative on many questions, Blair's political interests generally caused him to take sides with Chase. He frequently complained that Seward had too much to say about appointments in his department.[1]

The rivalry between the two Republican factions in New York was so bitter and constant that Lincoln rested about it. Christopher Adams was a candidate for the office of superintending architect of the Treasury. "Mr. Adams is magnificently recommended," the President wrote to Chase; "but the great point in his favor is that Thurlow Weed and Horace Greeley join in recommending him. I suppose the like never happened before, and never will again; so it is now or never."[2]

Although Lincoln knew Seward's failings, he had a high regard for him both as a man and as a public officer. From the day the President-elect offered to the great New York Senator the highest office in his administration, until the well-seasoned President came, in April, 1865, to tell the Secretary of State of a trip to the late capital of the Confederacy, a close association and mutual confidence, which did great credit to each, existed between them. More than once Seward sub-

im, and that Senator Harris favored the appointment, as did Representatives Van Horn and Fenton, and that I presumed the other representatives from western New York would not object, and that I supposed therefore that the nomination would certainly be made.

"To my surprise this morning I learn that another gentleman was brought forward by Mr. King in the conference in your department last night.

"I have never favored nor pressed my brother, and never spoke a word in his behalf to the Attorney-General, and never mentioned him until this morning to the President; but I cannot abandon him or consent that the decision of the Attorney-General in his favor shall be rescinded."—Seward MSS.

[1] Statement of John A. Kasson, First Assistant Postmaster-General, 1861–62, to the writer.

[2] 2 Lincoln's *Works*, 44.

mitted patiently to severe reverses in his plans, and
tinued thoroughly loyal toward his official superior, wh
was evidence of good intentions as well as of good ju
ment. The President was the only member of the
ministration whom Seward praised often. And Linc
never felt himself so worthily President as when he
corporated Seward's best thoughts with his own.
though Seward and Lincoln were men of very dissim
temperaments, intellectual qualities, and methods, t
were thoroughly congenial. There was no other dep
ment-chief at all comparable with Seward as a comp
ion; he was full of resources, and always cheerful
vivacious, both in council and in society. Because
was so energetic, ready, and hopeful, his influence w
the President was undoubtedly greater than that of
other Cabinet officer.

Lincoln could always understand and generally
strain the inharmonious elements in the administrat
but it was almost impossible to do either with the w
ring factions outside. The old party lines were w
indistinct in 1861 and 1862. The great question
not whether the Union should be saved, but how to s
it. The radicals, led by such men as Chase, Gree
Sumner, and Thaddeus Stevens, thought that a r
less and universal emancipation policy would be a p
acea for all the dangers and woes. Their right w
was composed of abolition zealots, most of whom
the brains of Jacobins and the hearts of gentle phi
thropists. As they acted upon an interpretation
Seward's "higher law" that he himself refrained f
adopting, they either were ready to ignore the Co
tution or could easily convince themselves of the co
tutionality of any plan they thought important.
conservatives that were sincere Unionists in all circ
stances looked to Seward as their great exponent.
has been noticed, he was confident that the war c

rely and constitutionally be brought to a successful d only by treating slavery as a secondary or incidental sue. The left wing of the conservatives was made up men that were as reckless and as illogical as the abitionists, and much less respectable.

The lines of this division became more sharply defined the months passed. The people, as well as the polians, demand a hero for every victory and a scapeat for every defeat. It was especially so during these ars of revolution, when passion seemed to blaze and nsume like a conflagration. Lincoln leaned to the conrvative side, but he was non-partisan in most of his ts. And it is surprising to find how often he was expted from the sweeping denunciations hurled at the abinet and the military leaders. Of course there were ways violent orators and furious editors who made no stinctions; nor would they, if the archangel Gabriel d come, as a Unionist and constitutionalist, to explain e mysteries of the conflict and to bring it to the best rmination. The two factions not only had distinct eories and ideas, but they also chose military leaders d painted military cowards and military "butchers." ie radicals cried, "On to Richmond!" when the way as almost as unknown as the troops were undrilled; d they applauded Frémont's absurd antislavery procmation. The conservatives called them crazy abolinists, incapable of statesmanlike action. Frémont ddenly became a favorite with the radicals, while cClellan slowly but surely lost the confidence of all cept the conservatives.

Because Seward was so conspicuous and influential, he as blamed for many of the failures of 1861—and there ere not many Federal successes to be ascribed to any e. When the radical press and popular orators asked w many years it would take to bring to an end Sewd's "ninety-day war," the angry conservatives replied

that at the time this opinion was expressed it was sumed that the other departments would be conducte ably as the Department of State, and not mismanaged zealots. Such was the first froth of revolution. Th were frequent rumors of changes in the Cabinet. A the settlement of the *Trent* affair Seward's fortunes r with amazing suddenness; and the heavy pendulum vituperation swung to the other side. Nearly every admitted that the credit of averting war belonged chi to Seward, and his special friends called the radicals mark the result in matters over which he had actual trol. Behold the difference, they said, between victo in diplomacy and defeats in the field. This ought to h sufficed, but it did not. They demanded that Sew should be given as great influence in the administra as the radicals had accused him of exerting, for the servatives believed that his abilities and the state public affairs warranted it. Even the great and w balanced lawyer, William M. Evarts, wrote to the retary of State, January 2, 1862:

"Your position seemed to me not less difficult than posing. A chafing people, a Congress filled with mal tents and empty of leaders, a Cabinet with disturbed p and purposes, and long-accustomed freedom from sharply critical situations in our foreign affairs, were h to handle at home. . . .

"I hope you will feel strong enough to attempt wh am sure your friends feel as important to the compl ness of your fame in the history of the 'Great Rebell some Clarendon is to write, as to the dearest interest the country — the formation of a public-spirited Cabi framed to the issues that have come in *since* the elect The whole country is longing for this."[1]

A few weeks later the same friend wrote again: "T is a general expectation here that Secretary W

[1] Seward MSS.

ill leave the Cabinet, and that his place will be filled om New England"; and then he suggested that Richrd Henry Dana, of Boston, be appointed, for "his genral public ability, high character, and intrepid courage ould make him a most valuable colleague to yourself in e Cabinet."[1] It was a repetition of a frequent overght: men forgot that Lincoln, not Seward nor Chase, as President. Cameron alone went out, in January, 862, and that was because he was enveloped in a cloud f corruption.

Seward's aversion to a strictly antislavery policy was ntinually a pretext for attacks. The radicals recalled is words in the winter of 1860–61; and when the volume f diplomatic correspondence for 1861 was published, ear the end of that year, they found the despatches to ayton and to Adams saying that no moral principles ere to be brought into discussion before foreign govnments, and that the condition of slavery would reain just the same whether the revolution should suced or fail.[2] From the same store-house they took his eclaration that "Only an imperial or despotic governent could subjugate thoroughly disaffected and insurctionary members of the state." And all were used cutting weapons. This was the man, they said, whose iends asserted that he was the virtual head of the adinistration; and, they added, if the claim was warnted it explained why no moral questions had come to the conflict, and why there had been so little subjution of the disaffected. It was a specious but potent ethod of damaging an inconsistent yet zealous patriot. otwithstanding the spring-flood of antislavery activity at began in the winter of 1861–62, Lincoln, as has been en, could be induced to go only a little beyond what

[1] February 3, 1862. Seward MSS.

[2] See *ante*, pp. 162, 357. An editorial article in the New York *Tribune* of December 18, 1861, criticised Seward for this.

was known to be Seward's opinions at that time. The
fore, the emancipationists vented their anger upon
Secretary of State, and endeavored to make him sh
der the responsibility for every reverse in the field.

Seward's offences were much less serious than t
were represented to be. What he had said about
ercion was written even before the attempt to reli
Fort Sumter, which was avowedly not an effort to s
jugate South Carolina, but merely a military declarat
of a right to supply and hold that particular fort.
though the prophecy about slavery was made a few d
later, it was written three months before Congress pas
the Crittenden resolution, which contained Seward's ic
and was an official announcement of the national pol
He undoubtedly did believe that the contest itself wo
not immediately destroy slavery, for, like a great m
others, he fully expected that the next campaign wo
see the beginning of the end of hostilities, if not
end itself. If Confederate disintegration had dated fr
the early spring of 1862, it would then, considering
the circumstances, have been entirely unnecessary
unstatesmanlike, if not positively injurious, to attack
very directly.

As soon as McClellan's reverses before Richmond
gan, the severe criticisms on Seward increased in n
ber and virulence, and efforts were made "to sow
seeds of disunion" in the relations between the Se
tary of State and his colleagues.[1] His services in
North in connection with the call for troops did not
pease his enemies. In July it was said that he wa
leave the Cabinet.[2] When it was seen that he could
be displaced by means of disconnected attacks, his

[1] 3 Seward, 98.

[2] Robert D. Pine wrote, July 25, 1862: "I sincerely hope that
is no foundation for the reported rumor here of your resigning
station at the helm."—Seward MSS.

nies began to organize. Early in September a committee from New York, claiming to represent hostile entiment in that state, and especially the opinions of ne five New England governors, came to Washington "insist on the resignation of Messrs. S[eward] and [lair?]." In the same paragraph in which Chase reorded this fact he said that he

had never known Mr. Seward to object to any *action*, however vigorous, of a military nature, though his influence ad been cast in favor of harmonizing the various elements support to the administration, by retaining General McIellan in command, and by avoiding action which would likely to alienate the border states. I added that in his ishes of harmony I concurred; and that I credited him ith good motives in the choice of means to ends, though could not always concur with him in judgment as to their aptation."[1]

he presumption and personal motives of the committee rovoked Lincoln to say: "It is plain enough what you ant — you want to get Seward out of the Cabinet. here is not one of you who would not see the country ined if you could turn out Seward."[2] Bryant wrote to friend, September 15th: "Some of our best and most inent men have visited Washington to remonstrate ith him [Lincoln, about his inactivity in military and tislavery matters], but with only partial effect. The fluence of Seward is always at work, and counteracts e good impressions made in the interviews with men a different class."[3] It was probably within a few eeks of this time that Joseph Medill said in an undated ter to Schuyler Colfax:

"McClellan in the field and Seward in the Cabinet have en the evil spirits that have brought our grand cause to very brink of death. Seward must be got out of the binet. He is Lincoln's evil genius. He has been Presi-

[1] Warden's *Chase*, 467. [2] Warden's *Chase*, 468.
[3] 2 Godwin's *Bryant*, 178.

dent *de facto*, and has kept a sponge saturated with chl
form to Uncle Abe's nose all the while, except one or
brief spells.". . .[1]

So much for the opposition to Seward in the sum
and autumn of 1862.

It should not be inferred that the conservatives had
reproaches for their enemies. It was Seward's misf
une rather than his fault that many Democrats and De
cratic newspapers that had formerly been counted as
southern had come to be his stanch allies, and he was
often blamed for their opinions. The New York *Her*
belonged to this class, and, of course, violently assa
the radicals, just as in former years it had assailed S
ard himself. On July 9, 1862, it called for "the
moval of the imbeciles from the Navy and War Dep
ments"; and, about this time, it very frequently spok
the "abolition traitors." On November 28th it alle
that the movement against Seward was led by Wen
Phillips, who had called for a radical change of men
measures; that the preliminary proclamation of em
cipation was the beginning of the change in measu
and that the dismissal of McClellan was the first ste
a movement to get rid of Seward, Bates, and Blair.
expressed the opinion that Seward was "the only m
ber of the Cabinet who has done his work thorough
efficiently, and successfully." On December 18th it
clared that the *Tribune* and the radicals were res
sible for the result at Fredericksburg. The New Y
Times, too, called for a new Cabinet, ready to ado
policy of energy, of stronger, broader, and more pe
vering statesmanship, instead of what was regarde
unsteady and shifting.[2] Everybody understood thi
equivalent to a demand that Seward's ideas should
given supremacy.

[1] Hollister's *Colfax*, 200.

[2] *Times*, September 15, 18

The success of the Democrats in the election of 1862 nd the Federal defeat at Fredericksburg were charged gainst Seward by the radicals; but there was no ground r their accusations. When the *Diplomatic Correspondce* for 1862 appeared, near the end of that year, they und a despatch that well suited their purposes. It was ritten July 5th, in the midst of the political excitement sulting from the disasters of the campaign in the Pensula. Its principal sentence was:

"It seems as if the extreme advocates of African slavery d its most vehement opponents were acting in concert tother to precipitate a servile war — the former by makg the most desperate attempts to overthrow the Federal nion, the latter by demanding an edict of universal emanpation as a lawful and necessary, if not, as they say, the ly legitimate, way of saving the Union."[1]

was as indiscreet as it was useless to put such a sennce into the official records, and nothing less than an cident would seem to account for its publication.[2] harles Sumner, who was chairman of the Senate comittee on foreign affairs and had been one of Seward's verest critics in diplomacy and on the question of avery, learned from the President that the despatch d never been submitted to him for approval. There as nothing strange about this, for the despatch was erely an expression of an opinion in no way design- to affect foreign relations; but it was regarded as a re opportunity to create a disagreement between the esident and the Secretary of State.

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 124.

[2] The biographers of Lincoln and of Sumner (6 Nicolay and Hay, 264; Pierce, 110) thought it strange that Seward should have such ideas short a time before the President made known his intention about ancipation. They overlooked the fact that Seward was speaking *universal* emancipation, which was no part of Lincoln's programme, was made very evident in his letter of August 22d to Greeley.

About the middle of December a caucus of Re
lican Senators passed a resolution asking the Presi
to dismiss Seward. Later, this was changed into a
quest for a reconstruction of the Cabinet, but it was
understood that the Secretary of State was the tar
Nine Senators—Grimes, Sumner, Trumbull, Pome
Fessenden, Collamer, Harris, Howard, and Wade—
appointed as a committee to wait on Lincoln.
ator Preston King alone dissented,[2] and, refusing t
bound to secrecy by the caucus, he hurried off to in
Seward. Wishing to anticipate the action of the
mittee, and to relieve Lincoln of embarrassment, Se
immediately wrote his resignation, and King ca
it to the White House. The next day the comm
called on the President and formally attacked Sew
Except in relation to slavery, they seem not to
questioned his conduct of affairs in the Departme
State. Lincoln described their criticism in this ho
figure of speech: "While they seemed to believe i
honesty, they also appeared to think that when I h
me any good purpose or intention Seward contrive
suck it out of me unperceived."[3] No conclusion
then reached, except that the conference should be
tinued that evening. Lincoln soon talked matters
with the Cabinet, showing no signs of yielding t
strange demand, and he finally instructed all e
Seward to meet him that evening.

When the time arrived for continuing the confere
the committee and the Cabinet were surprised by
brought together. Then the President opened th
cussion by reading the resolution and commenting
some of the points with "gentle severity," as his
raphers describe it. Of course, the Senators had to

[1] 6 Nicolay and Hay, 264.
[2] Schuckers's *Chase*, 474; Welles, 83.
[3] 6 Nicolay and Hay, 265.

he aggressive; whereas Lincoln's attitude and the nature of the case compelled the Cabinet to act on the defensive. No Secretary could properly side with the Senators on such an issue; Stanton's simile explained the reason: "This Cabinet, gentlemen, is like yonder window. Suppose you allow it to be understood that passers-by might knock out one pane of glass—just one at a time—how long do you think any panes would be left in it?"[1] Chase's position was exceptional, and he was greatly embarrassed. He dared not then criticise Seward, as it was notorious he had done at other times. Yet to defend him would have been a very patent stultification. It was so evident he was caught in a trap that he expressed his regrets that he had not stayed away.[2] Before the long meeting broke up Lincoln had once more proved his superior shrewdness. All the members of the Senate committee had wished to have Seward expelled; but when they were asked: "Do you, gentlemen, still think Seward ought to be excused?" only four of the eight Senators present answered in the affirmative. Three were non-committal, and one had completely reversed his position. The Senators had met with a repulse, but the contest had not ended.[3]

[1] 3 Seward, 147. [2] 6 Nicolay and Hay, 266, 267.

[3] Seward and his son withdrew from the Department of State on the day following the resignation. The New York *Times* of December 21st said, in a leading editorial article, that the metropolis had been as much startled on the 20th as it was a few days earlier by the defeat of Burnside. As yet the *Times* did not comprehend the situation. "Mr. Seward has been the right hand man of the President from the day of his election until now," the same article declared. "He has had in a great measure the shaping of the policy of the government, besides the management of what has been, on several occasions, its most important and difficult department. . . . Other departments are filled with men who have no reputation, no administrative ability, no public respect—who are at the same time imbecile and headstrong, who have driven the government to the verge of ruin, and who would long ago have vacated their posts had they had the least regard

On the morning of December 20th, when Lincoln a
most of the Cabinet met again for further consultati
Chase orally offered his resignation, but continued to h
the written communication in his hand. "The Presid
stepped forward and took it with an alacrity that s
prised, and it must be said disappointed, Mr. Chase
From that moment the way was clear, for Lincoln
the leader of each faction at his mercy. "Yes, Judg
said the President to a caller shortly afterward, "I
ride on now, I've got a pumpkin in each end of my bag
If either faction should become too bold, it could
humbled by accepting the resignation of its chief a
by refusing to permit that of the other. But Chase
recognized as a great Secretary of the Treasury; a
Lincoln had too keen a sense both of humor and of
tice to allow an efficient officer to receive very sev
punishment even for extreme folly. Seward was
tainly not less efficient. If the President had relea
either Seward or both Seward and Chase, it would
have been interpreted to mean that the Senate had
right, or at least the power, to get rid of any Secret
whom it disliked. This would, indeed, have been v
hazardous for the administration; for it would h
encouraged the discontent shown in the recent e
tions and strengthened by Burnside's failure. M
over, France was eager for an excuse to intervene;

for the opinion, the sentiment, or the welfare of the country. If
will not resign, they should be expelled before the country is s
over the brink of despair on which it is now trembling."

By the next day the *Times* had learned the particulars of the c
and therefore it expressed a very different opinion: "Mr. Sewa
supposed to have been the leading man in the administration—to
suggested policies and caused their adoption, to have held back
President from measures which he desired to adopt, and to have fo
upon him action he did not wish to perform. We believe that all
is without the slightest foundation in fact."

[1] 6 Nicolay and Hay, 268.

[2] 3 Seward, 14

e British government could hardly have resisted the pular demand that would have been made for the cognition of the Confederacy, if Lincoln's Cabinet had ne to pieces under such influences. Fortunately, Lin-ln did not forget that the best way to control men d events is to keep control of them. With Chase and ward outside the Cabinet, their respective followers ere sure to be less friendly to the President. While ase and Seward remained in the Cabinet, neither they r their friends were likely to attack Lincoln, openly d directly. So, on the 20th, the President wrote a joint te to these Secretaries, saying that "after most anxious nsideration," his "deliberate judgment" was that the blic interest would not permit him to accept their resig-tions; and he requested them to resume the duties of eir departments.

In a single sentence of fourteen words Seward answered e next morning, that he had "cheerfully resumed the ictions" of Secretary of State. Chase was still serious-embarrassed. He would have preferred not to re-en-the Cabinet if Seward had insisted on withdrawing; t Seward again at the Department of State, while he nself remained out of office, was not a pleasing pros-ct. Finally, on the 22d, he wrote to the President ex-essing a willingness "to conform my action to your dgment and wishes."[1] The New York *Herald* of the d called Chase the Mephistopheles of the Cabinet, and arged that he had "been the prime mover in all the lical schemes and an active co-worker with his con-derates of the Senate against Mr. Seward." This was severe; but Chase's actions both before and during Cabinet crisis are unintelligible except on the assump-n that his dislike or jealousy of Seward's influence was ery important factor in what took place.

[1] Warden, 509.

The real Cabinet crisis ended before Christmas, 1
but the newspapers and the politicians continue
wrangle for months. Still smarting from Seward's
ting but imprudent declaration that "the extreme
vocates of African slavery and its most vehemen
ponents were acting in concert," Greeley affected g
indignation and charged Seward with sending despat
without submitting them to the President for appr
The intended implication was that the Secretary
too presumptuous and headstrong to be tolerate
the administration. Raymond, as usual, replied fo
friend. The *Times* declared that not one despatch,
merely and exclusively formal and technical in its
acter," had been sent to any foreign Minister wit
the approval of the President, and that this state
was made on the authority and by the permissio
the President and of the Secretary of State. This
a flank attack that Greeley had not anticipated, a
showed that he had undertaken a most gratuitous
The *Tribune* maintained that the exception was so b
that it was practically a confession. Greeley was st
in a single charge, but his enemies were more reso
ful. It came out as Raymond expected when he w
February 27, 1863: "I think before the matter is e
I shall put Mr. Greeley into an awkward position.[1]

For a man that was usually so adroit and cir
spect, Seward had a strange faculty for getting hi
into annoying complications, and the extrications
not always satisfactory. Like a lion-tamer or s
charmer, he seemed to think at times that he could
ly perform what others could do only with the gre
risk. His share in the responsibility for the trip
Mercier, the French Minister, made to Richmond, i

[1] Seward MSS. The discussion between the *Tribune* and the
continued almost daily for two weeks after about February 20,

ring of 1862, illustrated this trait. The particulars of e incident did not become known until early in 1863. hen Mercier expressed to Seward a regret that he did t know more about the condition of affairs in Richnd, the Secretary obtained the President's permission r him to visit that capital, as has been mentioned. Sewd was sure that the "insurrection" was "shrinking and riveling into very narrow dimensions," and he hoped at Mercier might "come back prepared with some plan alleviate the inconveniences of his countrymen in the uth, who were not acting against this government."[1] fore Mercier started Seward remarked that he would pleased to find himself again in the Senate with those om the South might see fit to send thither, and that e North was animated by no sentiment of vengeance. ercier's subsequent account made it plain that Seward oke unofficially,[2] but what the Frenchman said in Richnd led to very different inferences. To the Confederate cretary of State he expressed the belief that the United ates would in time get possession of all the southern rts; but Benjamin thought he convinced Mercier that any case there was no doubt of the ultimate indepenace of the Confederacy. Mercier said that it would a matter of infinite gratification to himself and his vernment if his good offices could be interposed in y way to restore peace, and he suggested political inpendence combined with commercial union. But, he narked, with regret, one side would not hear a sence that did not begin with "independence," while the er insisted that not a syllable should be spoken except the basis of "Union."[3] At this time Seward wrote Weed: "Mercier's visit to Richmond was on con-

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 335.
[2] New York *Tribune*, February 5, 1863, printed Mercier's despatch cribing how the trip originated, etc.
[3] Benjamin to Slidell, July 19, 1862.

sultation with me, and it will produce fruits, I ho
In a letter of June 25, 1862, to Bigelow, he spo
"our consenting to Mr. Mercier's going to Richm
as being meaningless.[2]

The *Tribune*, of course, led the attack, and repres
that Seward was using the French Minister to i
Confederates to return to their seats in the Se
This led Senator Grimes to introduce a resolutio
questing the President to communicate the charac
the suggestions that the French Minister was autho
to make from the government, or from the Secreta
State, to the Confederate authorities.[4] Seward re
that "since March 4, 1861, no communication, dire
indirect, formal or informal, save in relation to pris
of war, has been held by this government, or by the
retary of State, with the insurgents, their aiders, or
tors; no passport has been granted to any foreign
ister to pass the military lines, except by the Presi
direction."[5] Of course the sweeping declaration abo
holding any communication, direct or indirect, wi
surgents left out of view what had taken place bet
Seward and Gwin, Hunter, and Campbell in March
April, 1861. Seward wrote to Dayton, March 16,

"Nothing was ever more preposterous than the ide
gendered here, and sent abroad to perplex Europe, th
American Secretary of State would employ a plenipo
ary of the Emperor of France to negotiate with Am
insurgents, and that a plenipotentiary of such a power
accept such a mission."[6]

This was a good reply to the false charges, but
not show that what he had actually done was
necessary or wise.

[1] 3 Seward, 88.
[2] Bigelow MSS.
[3] New York *Tribune*, February 4, 1863.
[4] *Globe*, 1862-63, 8
[5] 6 Moore's *Rebellion Record*, Diary, p. 45.
[6] 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 186

Seward had more bitter and active enemies among the liticians than any other member of the Cabinet; yet, cepting Welles, he was the only Secretary that served roughout the administrations of Lincoln and of John- n. There was always a strong element of pugnacity, rsonal hatred, or ambition in the disagreements that ase and Blair, respectively, had with various men and ctions. Therefore, Lincoln did not find it practicable retain either of them to the end of his first term. ward had a positive dislike for a quarrel of any sort; d, finding himself involved in one, he always tried to tricate himself in some diplomatic way. He had his ilings; but his great intelligence, his affable manners, s earnest desire to serve his country, and the great value the work he did, made it easy to overlook his mistakes d to feel that he was indispensable to the administra- n in the crisis.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

THE BRINK OF A FOREIGN WAR: BLOCKADE-RUNNING BUILDING CONFEDERATE WAR-SHIPS

THE Confederates did not expect to prevent a bl ade, but they counted on blockade-running as a suffic means of communication with the outside world t some foreign nation should come to their assista They were also confident that by sending out p teers and improvised cruisers they could destroy commerce of the United States. And if war-ships c be obtained abroad, they alone might be able to b the blockade. Foreign capital and enterprise were attracted to the contraband trade with the Confeder It was not long before the two great powers that complaining of the blockade, but dared not disregar were building different kinds of war-ships with w the Confederates hoped to sweep United States chantmen from the seas, and to open southern p The serious international questions that arose in co quence brought the United States to the brink foreign war.

It was impossible to watch strictly all of the three t sand miles of Confederate coast-line with its one hun and eighty-five harbor openings. At many points t were, especially in the beginning, no serious obstacl blockade-running. Wilmington, Charleston, and Sa nah, on the Atlantic, and Galveston and Brownsvill the Gulf, were the principal ports. Charleston ha was the one most frequently entered at first, altho

are was taken at an early period in the war to block-
de it effectively. The numerous inlets to Wilmington
ade it impossible to shut off much of its commerce
ntil the third year of the war, when the Federal gov-
rnment was able to stretch a long line of ships in front
f the entrances.[1] As many as forty-two vessels entered
nd cleared at Wilmington in the summer of 1861, and
ne hundred and fifty arrived at Charleston in the six
onths prior to December of that year.[2] But the size,
uantities, and qualities of the cargoes of all blockade-
nners at different points were not such as either to
isprove the efficiency of the blockade or to supply the
eeds of the Confederacy.

As the blockade grew in efficiency the value of ar-
cles imported into the Confederacy rose, while that of
otton and tobacco rapidly declined. Because the pos-
bilities of greater profit, in case of a successful voyage,
out balanced the increased risks, the contraband trade
d not become less tempting. At first all sorts of sail-
g vessels and steamboats were used; but when the Fed-
al government increased the number of the blockaders,
me of which could make good speed, only those block-
le-runners with steam and of light draft, and built so as
attract little attention, were likely to escape capture.[3]

[1] 1 Wilson's *Ironclads in Action*, 186. [2] Soley, 89.

[3] "The typical blockade-runner of 1863–64 was a long, low side-wheel
amer of from four to six hundred tons, with a slight frame, sharp
d narrow, its length perhaps nine times its beam. . . . The hull
e only a few feet out of the water, and was painted a dull gray or
d color, so that it could hardly be seen by daylight at two hundred
rds."—Soley, 156. They could often steal past the blockaders with-
t being noticed, and many of them were so swift that it was impos-
le to overtake them at sea. The *R. E. Lee*, which ran the blockade
enty-one times in ten months, showed what was possible. But the
e thousand one hundred and forty-nine prizes, two hundred and ten
which were steamers, brought in during the war, and the three hun-
d and fifty-five vessels that were burned or destroyed (Soley, 44),
l a more reliable story.

Capital and a venturesome spirit early became
requisites of success. The Confederates lacked cap
but many of them possessed daring and knowledge of
coast and of the conditions at home, which made th
invaluable as captains and pilots. The tastes and
sources of Englishmen could supply the rest; and
proximity of Bermuda and the Bahamas gave th
special advantages. Large numbers of blockade-
ners were built on the Clyde, and were soon bu
engaged in this contraband trade. From Bermuda
Wilmington is but six hundred and seventy-
miles; to Charleston, seven hundred and seventy-t
and to Savannah, eight hundred and thirty-four. F
Nassau the distance to the same cities is five hund
and seventy, five hundred and fifteen, and five hund
miles respectively.[1] Havana, Cuba, was the port r
used by the blockade-runners in the Gulf of Mexico
is five hundred and ninety miles from Mobile, and
hundred and seventy from New Orleans; but after
first few months of the war the blockade of the
ports as far as the mouth of the Mississippi was ge
ally very strict. Galveston was accessible most of
time, and Matamoras, Mexico, on the Rio Grande,
opposite Brownsville, Texas, could not be closed
cause it belonged to a neutral power, although it
practically a Confederate port. These foreign p
suddenly became great emporiums for cotton and fo
sorts of merchandise intended for the Confederacy.

To a vessel sailing for a Confederate port the da
of capture was, as a general rule, proportionate to
distance to be traveled. *Bona-fide* commerce betw
neutral ports is, of course, not subject to interfere
Hence merchants and speculators interested in run
the blockade soon adopted the plan of pretending

[1] Soley, p. 36, map.

oods that were really for the Confederacy were to be ipped merely to Bermuda or Nassau or Matamoras; ere they were temporarily unloaded, or were transrred to steamers specially built to run the blockade, d then what was often practically the same voyage as continued. The United States government could not ford to be outwitted by this subterfuge. Where there as reasonable suspicion of a design ultimately to send e cargo to a Confederate port, the ship was captured, ken before a prize court, and then, if the evidence owed a hostile destination and a guilty knowledge on e part of the ship-owner, both the ship and the cargo ere condemned.[1] This was done on the theory that ere was but one continuous voyage from the port of parture to that of ulterior destination. Transshipent made no difference, for the court held that "the ips are planks of the same bridge, all of the same kind, d all necessary to the convenient passage of persons d property from one end to the other."[2]

The ingenuity of the persons engaged in this comerce was still unexhausted. They sent goods from urope to a United States port, thence to the Bermudas Nassau or Matamoras for the purpose of transshipent. It was believed that the United States would find impracticable to check commerce between their own d neutral ports. The presumption was correct for a ort time. As soon as this peculiar trade developed ch proportions as to attract attention, Congress passed aw empowering the Secretary of the Treasury to re- e a clearance to any vessel laden with merchandise at he had satisfactory reason to believe was intended, atever its ostensible destination, for any insurgent rt.[3] It also authorized the collector of any port to re-

[1] Bernard, 308 ff. [2] Quoted Bernard, 310.

[3] *Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 300.

quire a bond from the master or owner of any ship t
the cargo would be delivered at the port for which
was cleared.

The diplomatic correspondence on these questi
was almost wholly with Great Britain. Of course
views of Seward and of Russell disagreed, for each
manded what was most advantageous to his gove
ment.

In regard to the question of broken voyages, the Brit
Secretary insisted that the intent to land merchandise
neutral ports protected it from seizure until it left t
port. Seward's line of reasoning is shown in a co
munication he sent to Lord Lyons, May 12, 1862, ab
the trade with Matamoras:

"It is only very recently that this especially enlar
Matamoras trade has come to our notice. Suddenly
quietly as palaces, cities, states, and empires rise in the t
of the Arabian Nights under the waving of a wand or the
terance of a spell, that trade rose from a petty barter t
commerce that engaged the mercantile activity of Liverp
and London. Simultaneously roads across the interio
Texas were covered with caravans, the cotton of disl
citizens in the insurrectionary region became, all at on
the property of the treasonable conspiracy against
Union, and it was hypothecated, by its agents, for a fore
loan to satisfy obligations contracted by them in the fitt
out and equipping and clearing from British ports na
expeditions to destroy the commerce of the United Sta
The *Peterhoff* was about the first discovered of the ves
engaged in this expanded trade. Unusual arts and dev
were alleged, with much probability, to have been used
her owners to secure for her immunity as a trader boun
Matamoras with a lawful cargo, when, in fact, she was
signed not to reach, or even seek, that port at all, bu
discharge her freight into rebel lighters, at the mouth
the Rio Grande, at the order of pretended consignees,
were her passengers, to be conveyed at once to the pos
sion of the insurgents on American, not Mexican, soil.
was indicated, moreover, as a forerunner of other fraudu
craft of the same character, organized with regularity

s to constitute a contraband packet-line. She was searched, nd upon probable grounds was seized and sent into the earest available port for adjudication."[1]

his meant that the United States claimed the right o prevent trade between neutral ports whenever that ade appeared to be a device for getting goods into a lockaded port. The error lay in the fact that Seward as ready to assume, from mere probability, what inter- ational law required should be well substantiated by gal evidence.

The regulations to prevent the shipment of contra- and merchandise of various kinds, especially coal, from he United States to neutral ports, where it might be old or forwarded to the Confederates, opened a new line f discussion. Because these regulations were directed gainst the trade with the Bahamas and affected British terests almost solely, Russell alleged that they were n anti-British enactment, and were both an unfriendly t and a violation of commercial treaties.

"The false assumptions," he said, "which seem to pervade e views of the United States government with respect to assau are that it is a violation of neutrality for a British lony to carry on any active trade with the so-styled Con- derate States during the existence of the blockade, and at, in aid of the inefficiency of the blockading force, an mbargo may lawfully be placed on a particular trade of itish commerce at New York."[2]

In Seward's formal reply to the British *chargé d'affaires* Washington he regretted that, although it had been imed that the action was in contravention of inter- tional law, the particular principles or maxims violated d not been named, and he continued:

"By the law of nations every state is sovereign over its n citizens and strangers residing within its limits, its

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1863, 536.

[2] *Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 305.

own productions and fabrics, and its own ports and wat
and its highways, and, generally, within all its proper
ritories. It has a right to maintain that sovereignty aga
sedition and insurrection by civil preventives and pena
and armed force, and it has a right to interdict and
hibit, within its own boundaries, exportation of its pro
tions and fabrics and the supplying of traitors, in a
against itself, with material and munitions, and any o
form of aid or comfort. It has a right, within its
territories, to employ all the means necessary to m
these prohibitions effective. . . . It [the law of Congr
does not confine its prohibitions or its requirements
British vessels trading between New York and the Baha
but applies them to all vessels of all nations, including
United States, wherever trading, whether with the Baha
or with any other part of the world. . . . They involve
question of neutral rights, because no neutral has or
have a right more than any citizen of the United State
do an act within their exclusive jurisdiction which is
hibited by the statutes and laws of the country. The
has nothing to do with the blockade of the insurrectio
ports, because it confines its prohibitions and requirem
to transactions occurring and to persons residing or b
within the ports actually possessed by the United Sta
and under their undisputed protection and control."[1]

The Secretary of State and the American Ministe
London complained that subjects of Great Britain w
the principal foreign supporters of the Confederate c
merce, and that the British government should tr
check the blockade-running.

"Information derived from our consul at Liverpo
Seward wrote to Adams, "confirms reports which
reached us that insurance companies in England are in
ing vessels engaged in running our blockade, and
vessels carrying contraband of war. This is, in effec
combination of British capitalists, under legal authorit
levy war against the United States. It is entirely in
sistent with the relations of friendship which we, ou
part, maintain toward Great Britain; and we cannot be

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1863, 301, 302.

hat her Britannic Majesty's government will regard it as ompatible with the attitude of neutrality proclaimed by hat government. . . .

"Pray bring this subject to the notice of Earl Russell, and sk for intervention in some form which will be efficient."[1]

Again, later, he expressed this opinion:

"The blockade amounts practically to a closing of all he insurgent ports except Wilmington, and the contra- and trade there is now so exceedingly abridged that it eems unaccountable to us that Great Britain should not e ready to suppress it altogether, and accept in lieu the estoration of a free and prosperous commerce under the reaties and laws of the United States."[2]

Russell thought that "two things totally distinct" ad been confounded:

"The foreign enlistment act is intended to prevent the ubjects of the crown from going to war when the sovereign s not at war. Thus private persons are prohibited from tting out a ship-of-war in our ports, or from enlisting in he service of a foreign state at war with another state, or in he service of insurgents against a foreign sovereign or state. n these cases the persons so acting would carry on war, and hus might engage the name of their sovereign and of their ation in belligerent operations. But owners and masters f merchant-ships carrying warlike stores do nothing of he kind. If captured for breaking a blockade or carrying ontraband of war to the enemy of the captor, they sub- nit to capture, are tried, and condemned to lose their argo. This is the penalty which the law of nations has ffixed to such an offence, and in calling upon her Majesty's overnment to prohibit such adventures you in effect call pon her Majesty's government to do that which it belongs o the cruisers and the courts of the United States to do or themselves.

"There can be only one plea for asking Great Britain us to interpose. That plea is that the blockade is in ality ineffective, and that merchant-ships can enter with npunity the blockaded ports. But this is a plea which I resume you will not urge."[3]

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 46. [2] 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1864, 201.

[3] *Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 93.

Russell's reasoning was sound. Seward had claimed a right more than could have been legally granted as favor.

But no one of these incidents was deemed to be of sufficient importance to warrant more than a protest, for there were already too many serious questions.

As has been noticed, Jefferson Davis's reply to Lincoln's call for troops was a call for privateers; but privateering did not meet with the success expected, because the blockade made it impossible to get the prizes before a court for condemnation.

The first Confederate commerce-destroyer, the *Sumter*, was purchased at New Orleans in April, 1861. Raphael Semmes was made commander, and his instructions from the Secretary of the Navy were to go to sea and "do the enemy's commerce the greatest injury in the shortest time."[1] He ran the blockade at the mouth of the Mississippi, and, during the first week of July, 1861, captured eight merchantmen. Between that time and the beginning of the next year the *Sumter* cruised along the coast of South America, back through the West Indies, and then eastward to Spain. In all, she took seventeen or eighteen prizes,[2] caused much alarm and loss, and eluded or ran away from the many vessels sent in pursuit of her, until she was finally blockaded at Gibraltar, and sold in consequence.

The early work of the *Sumter* confirmed the Confederates in their belief in commerce-destroyers, but they realized that marked success would depend on the ability of their government to procure war-ships abroad, for there was no opportunity to construct them at home. Two naval officers specially qualified for making such

[1] Scharf, *The Confederate States Navy*, 787.
[2] Soley, 176; Scharf, 789.

urchases were sent to Europe in the winter of 1861–62. Captain James D. Bulloch had the chief responsibility or this very important enterprise. But could such ships e obtained? International law forbids a neutral nation o supply vessels of war to belligerents; and Great Brit-in had a neutrality law that was supposed to be very ringent.

The *Florida* was the first of the ships bought in Eng-nd. She was constructed in the autumn and winter f 1861–62, and it was pretended that she was for the talian government; but, although it was notorious that ne belonged to the Confederacy, the protests of the nited States Minister were regarded as insufficient to arrant her detention. In March, 1862, she cleared from iverpool for Palermo and Jamaica, and British subjects, officers and crew, were engaged to take her to sea un-rmed and to transfer her to a Confederate commander Nassau. The equipments necessary to the destructive ork planned for her were sent in another vessel. At assau the United States consul twice tried to have the *reto*, as the ship was still called, seized, on the ground at she was intended for the Confederacy; but the urt released her, on account of a lack of evidence to ow a violation of the neutrality law. In August she ceived her armament near an uninhabited island sixty iles from Nassau, and was regularly commissioned for e Confederate service. J. N. Maffitt, soon to be al-ost as famous as Semmes, became her commander. ot finding it practicable to equip and man the ship lly in Cuba, Maffitt very boldly ran her into Mobile rough the blockade. In January, 1863, she steamed out st the blockading squadron and began her search for erchantmen. During the next fifteen months the *Flor-a* destroyed thirty-two vessels and bonded four others.[1]

[1] Beaman's *Alabama Claims*, 68.

Maffitt thoroughly carried out his instructions, which
said, were brief and to the point, leaving much to dis
tion, but more to the torch.

But it was the *Alabama* that showed what a sin
ship could do in injuring commerce; and the ala
and anger that it created, first and last, several ti
brought Great Britain and the United States to
verge of war. On June 23, 1862, Adams informed R
sell that a powerful war-steamer for the Confeder
service was about completed and nearly ready for
parture from Liverpool. The department of the gov
ment to which Russell referred the case reported t
there was not sufficient ground to warrant the detent
of the vessel or to interfere with it in any way. I
dence that the British government itself decided, J
29th, to be sufficient for these purposes was submit
July 22d, 23d, and 25th.[1] But before word was sen
Liverpool, the *290*, as the cruiser was called at first,
gone to sea without a clearance and on the pretenc
making a trial trip. She stopped at Moelfra Bay, ab
forty miles distant, where she shipped some of her c
and materials. In a few days she reached the Azo
Here British vessels from British ports brought her
mament, supplies, and officers. Semmes took comma
enlisted a crew from the men that had come in the
ferent ships, and hoisted the Confederate flag. The *A*
bama soon became a terror to American merchantm
In a little more than a year and a half she destro
about sixty vessels and property worth several mil
dollars.[2] She went first to the North Atlantic, wh
she captured and burned many whalers and grain-sh
Later she was in the West Indies and the Gulf
Mexico. In 1863 she cruised down the coast of Br
across to the Cape of Good Hope, through the Ind

[1] Bernard, 362–70.

[2] Scharf, 815, gives the particular
384

ean and the Bay of Bengal, and proceeded as far east the China Sea. Early in 1864 she returned to the tlantic. Semmes was surprisingly successful: he fre-ently found and made ocean-torches of helpless ships commerce, sailing under the United States flag, and had usually departed before his pursuers could reach e scene of his latest reported devastations. But, final-, the *Alabama* gave battle to the *Kearsarge* in the itish Channel, June 19, 1864, and was sunk.

Several other commerce-destroyers were purchased in itish ports. The *Georgiana* got to sea in January, 63, but was soon wrecked. The *Georgia* was bought Scotland, and began her career in April, 1863. Her mament and crew were forwarded from Liverpool in a itish ship, and were received in a French port. She ok many small prizes during her year of cruising. The *ppahannock* was bought and escaped British deten-n near the end of 1863, but she was abandoned before ing completely fitted out. Next to the *Alabama*, the *a King*, or *Shenandoah*, was the most successful of the nfederate cruisers. But as she did not begin her de-uctive work until near the end of 1864, her influence on diplomatic relations was not very important. The ssibility that every cruiser might inflict great dam-es upon the commerce of the United States created citement and aroused protests whenever it was ru-ored that a new one was building.

When the first extensive reports of the *Alabama's* hievements became known to Seward, he instructed lams to lay the facts of the case before the British gov-nment in the manner best calculated to obtain redress the national and private injuries sustained.[1] It was t the intention of the United States, he said, to harass eat Britain with impatient demands for immediate rep-ation:

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 216, 217.

"The purpose, first, is prevention of similar injuries l after. It is clear that there will soon be no commerce to the United States if the transaction of the *290* is t repeated and reiterated without check and with impu

"It ought not to be doubted in Great Britain that a ple who are only second in commerce to the British na itself cannot quietly consent to a wrongful strangulati their foreign trade."[1]

Adams was given full discretion as to the manne presenting the case. His energy and *savoir-faire* n it certain that he could best contend with the Br government on questions of international law tha quired close and well-balanced arguments.[2] Sew talent was of a different kind; and, moreover, he wa far away. He quickly saw the political and int tional meaning of different occurrences, and gave eral directions to Adams, who marshaled the facts usually fought the real diplomatic battle about the federate war-ships.

When, in March, 1863, Seward heard of the *Flor* capture of the *Jacob Bell* and her cargo, valued million and a half dollars, he told Adams that n merchants regarded this as portending the destru of the navigating interest of the United States, u either the British neutrality law could be enforce the Federal government should send out an adeq force, under letters of marque and reprisal, to pr the American merchant marine. Just then Seward self did not hold so extreme a view, for he believed

[1] 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1863, 14.

[2] A despatch of March 7, 1862, from Seward to Adams, con these complimentary sentences: "The President and the Cabin perfectly unanimous in approving of all your proceedings as th best in every case that could be adopted. I may add that the approbation is equally distinct and earnest. I speak very fr when I say that I do not recollect the case of any representati this country abroad who has won more universal approbation you have."—*Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 44.

reat Britain was becoming more considerate of our ghts.[1] Only a few weeks later he learned that the *lexandra*, another Confederate war-ship, was nearly ady to go to sea from Liverpool; and it was under- ood that others were building. Adams was instructed attempt by judicial proceedings to arrest the depart- e of the vessels, and William M. Evarts was sent road to confer with him in the matter.[2]

The British government decided to detain the *Alexan- a* and to order a prosecution of the persons concerned th what was regarded as a violation of the neutrality w, although, as Adams said, the Ministry would have breast a good deal of opposition and subject them- ves to heavy responsibilities if they should fail.[3] Con- ary to expectation, the verdict was for the defend- ts. It was evident that the *Alexandra* was intended r the Confederates, but the decision depended on the les of law. The Chief Baron charged the jury that e principal offence of actually equipping for hostile rposes could not be completed unless the equipping s so completed in British territory that the vessel was pable of hostile operations, and consequently that the empt to equip must be with the intent that she uld be so completed within British territory.[4] All orts were futile to get this decision reversed. The istruction put upon the neutrality law by the judges the Court of Exchequer indicated that ship-builders ld safely supply the Confederacy with all the war- ps that could be paid for, if they were not fully ipped in British ports. This would be ample com- sation for the Confederacy's misfortune in not being e to build war-ships at home.

[1] 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1863, 141, 142.
[2] 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1863, 210–12.
[3] 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1863, 222.
[4] This is Dana's statement, Dana's Wheaton's *International Law*,

The Federal victories at Vicksburg and at Gettysb
caused a despair in England that was almost as profo
as the previous confidence of Confederate success.[1]
there were still no signs that the government would
anything to prevent the building and departure of
Confederate vessels. For several months it had b
known that the Lairds were constructing at Liverp
two swift iron-clad, double-turreted steam rams. Th
were "plated with five and a half inches of iron
armed with four 9-inch rifled guns."[2] As usual, there
a pretence that they were not for the Confederacy;
Adams presented strong evidence to the contrary.
was probable that if these rams should reach the Un
States, they could lay under contribution any of
loyal cities on the coast or could break the block
at any point. Here was a possibility of changing
whole course of the war. Practically it was of no
sequence that the British government did not wish
help the Confederacy in any way; the important
was, that it did not prevent such Confederate engine
destruction to be built in and to depart from British po

"Can the British government suppose for a mome
Seward wrote to Adams, "that such an assault as is
meditated can be made upon us by British-built, arm
and manned vessels without at once arousing the w
nation and making a retaliatory war inevitable? You k
only to listen to the political debates in any part of
country to learn that the United States would accep
unprovoked foreign war now with more unanimity
cheerfulness than at any former period."[3]

On the same day, September 5, 1863, Adams
formed the British government that one of the i
clads was on the point of departure from England,
that the refusal to detain these ships would practic

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1863, 336. [2] 2 Maclay's *History of the Navy*, 5
[3] 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1863, 365.

ive the Confederates what they believed would bring bout results worth a hundred victories in the field. hen, with directness and candor, he added: "It would e superfluous in me to point out to your lordship that his is war." Adams's instructions were such that, if e had not been a consummate diplomatist, he would robably have said or done something more favorable war than to peace. He desisted from further argu- ent, or closing the legation, and referred the whole se to Washington for decision.[1] A note, dated Sep- mber 8th, from the British Secretary of State for oreign Affairs reads: "Lord Russell presents his com- liments to Mr. Adams, and has the honor to inform im that instructions have been issued which will pre- nt the departure of the two iron-clad vessels from iverpool."[2]

Commercial interest is nearly always the greatest ctor in the foreign policy of the British government. hen the Civil War began, the new tariff law was ost frequently complained of. Then came the prob- m of protecting and benefiting British shipping in- rests. The joint action of Great Britain and France as to shield the commerce of each, but the advantage ll chiefly to Great Britain. A little later the serious uestion was whether the British government should eak or disregard the blockade on account of the losses was causing to certain industries. But when, during e second and third years of the war, it was seen that merican shipping was rapidly coming under the British g, and that English merchants and manufacturers were

[1] 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1863, 367, 368.

[2] 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1863, 368. Before Adams's note was written Russell d ordered measures to be taken to prevent the departure of the ns, on any pretext; but it was not until the 8th that the govern- nt was officially committed as Adams urged. 4 Rhodes, 377 ff., es a full and interesting account of the incident.

profiting immensely by the supplying of ships and mu
tions of war, there arose, on this account, a strong se
ment in favor of keeping out of the conflict.

Seward understood why Great Britain dreaded a v
with the United States. On April 10, 1863, he had
structed Adams to inform the British government t
we were at the end of peaceful resources.[1] He frequen
wrote in a very significant way of the growing streng
of the Federal navy.

"We have now a navy, not, indeed, as ample as we p
posed, but yet one which we feel assured is not altoget
inadequate to the purposes of self-defence, and it is
rapidly increasing in men, material, and engines of w
. . . All the world might see, if it would, that the gr
arm of naval defence has not been thus inaugurated for
mere purpose of maintaining a blockade or enforcing
authority against the insurgents" . . .[2]

Sometimes he went too far, perhaps. After the vic
ries at Gettysburg and Vicksburg he felt confident
the success of the Federal cause in the field; he thr
off restraints and instructed Adams—expecting tha
would be repeated to the British government—that
should not cause surprise or complaint if the navy
the United States should be directed to pursue the C
federate cruisers into British ports, unless that gove
ment changed its course.[3] Adams too well underst
the dignity and peaceful resources of diplomacy to
his country at a disadvantage by repeating this thre
When the volume of diplomatic correspondence for t
year was published, and the British government he
of what Seward had written, a storm was raised in
House of Commons. This was not calmed until Rus

[1] 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1863, 211.

[2] To Adams, October 5, 1863. 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1863, 393. See also
Cor., 1862, 189, 216.

[3] 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1863, 310. [4] 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1864, 16

xplained that as the despatch had never been laid be-
re him he had been spared the "difficulty and pain of
ving an appropriate answer to it."[1]

Still more significant was the frequent suggestion
at the United States might have to send out hundreds
privateers to take revenge on British commerce.
eward's eagerness to have all available resources em-
oyed early brought him into close relations with men
xious to see privateers used to augment the strength
the Federal navy, although the Confederacy had no
mmerce for them to prey upon. Seward drafted a
ll authorizing the President to issue letters of marque,
used it to be introduced into the Senate, and helped
rward the project until Congress approved it. The
tute was sure to be a most impressive warning to
reat Britain and France, but to use privateers to per-
rm many of the duties of war-ships would be more
ely to bring on a war than to help avert one. Sew-
d's despatches frequently contained significant reports
to the progress of the bill and of the new power of the
esident. This much was politic. Adams had written
the Secretary that to issue letters of marque would
to play into the hands of the Confederates.[2] But
ward put such stress on the fact that Great Britain's
itude toward the Confederate ships was almost as de-
uctive of American shipping as if the United States
re at war with her, that he seemed to think more of
ing to counteract this misfortune than of avoiding
ll greater dangers. Fortunately the influence of Sum-
r and Welles kept Lincoln from yielding to so hazard-
s and needless an experiment as was proposed.[3]

No wonder Seward was not always calm and discreet
en he saw the record of losses rapidly increasing from

[1] 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1864, 168.

[2] 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1863, 158.

[3] 4 Pierce's *Sumner*, 120, 129, 130, 138; Welles, 146 ff.; 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 3, 141, 644, 662.

month to month.[1] Although some of his threats we unnecessary and extreme, his custom was to balan them, in either the same or a subsequent despatch, wi soothing sentences that pleaded for the preservation amicable relations. His aim seemed to be to mainta the impression abroad that war had no fears for hi —that he would probably welcome a conflict if Gre Britain should wish to begin it, but that it was n necessary to the realization of his own plans and pre erences. It had long been a habit for him to work o such subtle inconsistencies. They were never more e cusable or valuable than at this time, when he w dealing with a government that was controlled by unfriendly feeling toward the United States, but th refused, as long as it dared, to put a stop to acts th made its neutrality almost worthless.

In September, 1863, Cobden wrote to Bright: "Aft all, our chief reliance for the maintenance of a non-i tervention policy by France and England is not in t merits or justice of that course, but—it is sad to say— the tremendous warlike power manifested by the fr states of America."[2] To Seward belongs the cred of making this "tremendous warlike power" famo abroad. In January, 1864, Adams reported that pu lic opinion in England was "essentially changing regard to the obligation of this country to preve the gross violations of neutrality that have be heretofore tolerated."[3] This change was hastened the thought now occurring to many that Great Brita had been following a policy that would probably used against her commerce with most destructive effe

[1] About three hundred vessels belonging to citizens of the Uni States were destroyed, and nearly eight hundred merchant-ships w compelled, for safety, to give up an American for a British registry Scharf, 814 ff.; 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1865, 245.

[2] 2 Morley's *Cobden*, 413.

[3] 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1864, 83

henever she became involved in a foreign war. The ritish government bought the ironclad rams from the uilders, as the best means of solving the difficulty. nd before the end of May, 1864, Adams expressed ie opinion that the sentiment had become so strong gainst further countenancing the enterprises of the onfederate agents that probably the base of opera- ons would be transferred to France.[1] Russell had al- ady instructed the British Minister at Washington to ake a formal protest and remonstrance "against the forts of the authorities of the so-called Confederate tates to build war-vessels within her Majesty's domin- ns to be employed against the government of the nited States."

The change in the attitude of the British government used the liveliest indignation on the part of the Con- derates. Davis had complained, in his message of ecember, 1863, of unfriendly action on the part of reat Britain. And later, when he received Lord Lyons's mmunication inclosing Russell's instructions about the -called Confederate States, he left the reply to his ivate secretary, who characterized the term "so-called" a "studied insult," and said that any future docu- ent in which it occurred would be returned unan- vered; and he charged that Great Britain's neutral- y, "while pretending to be impartial," was "but a ver for treacherous, malignant hostility."[2] In Septem- r, 1864, Benjamin wrote to Slidell: "The English vernment has scarcely disguised its hostility. From e commencement of the struggle it has professed a wly invented neutrality which it had frankly defined meaning a course of conduct more favorable to the onger belligerents."[3]

[1] 2 *Dip. Cor.*, 1864, 29.
[2] 8 Moore's *Rebellion Record*, Docs., 514, 515.
[3] Bigelow, 164.

The offence of the British government was that it not use due diligence to prevent the departure of Confederate ships or to detain them when they ca within colonial ports. The attitude of the French g ernment was very different. As if fearing lest his forts to enlist Great Britain and Russia in the sche for joint intervention might not succeed, Napoleon s gested to Slidell, in October, 1862, that the Confeder might build war-ships in France, if "built as for the I ian government."[1] This was sufficient to convince Confederates that they had taken too seriously the Fre declaration of neutrality. Early in 1863, Bulloch, the C federate agent, opened negotiations with Arman, a gr ship-builder at Bordeaux, for "four clipper corvette about fifteen hundred tons and four hundred horse-pow to be armed with twelve or fourteen 6-inch rifled gun Arman, who was a member of the Chamber of Depu and a friend of the Emperor, easily obtained an offi authorization from the Minister of Marine. Two of ships were to be built at Bordeaux and two at Nan The application said that they were "destined by a eign shipper to ply the Chinese and Pacific seas, betw China, Japan, and San Francisco. Their special ar ment contemplates their eventual sale to the gov ments of China and Japan."[2] The fact that these sh were of the type of the *Alabama*, then sweeping the s warrants the belief that the French authorities well derstood the hollow pretence. A contract for two i clad rams of three hundred horse-power, for two mil francs each, was also made about this time, and their struction was soon begun. The work was to be pus forward with all possible haste, and it was expected t all the ships would be completed early in 1864.

[1] Bigelow, 130.

[2] 2 Bulloch's *Secret Service of the Confederate States in Europe,*

[3] Bigelow, 8.

In September, 1863, a stranger appeared at the United ates consulate at Paris and offered to sell to John gelow papers showing that several ships were then ilding at Nantes and Bordeaux for the Confederacy der the official authorization of the French govern- ent. The papers were bought for twenty thousand ancs. It was found that they had been stolen from e of the leading contractors, and that they contained that had been claimed for them. They disclosed that e of the contractors had obtained permission to inspect e government factory of arms so as to facilitate his sk. Dayton promptly presented the case to Drouyn Lhuys, and requested that action should be taken prevent the completion and delivery of the vessels.[1] e French Minister of Foreign Affairs "expressed mself as greatly surprised" at the revelations, and on pronounced the enterprise a breach of neutrality ich the French government would not tolerate, al- ough the contractors stoutly insisted on their original etension as to the ships. The authorization of the ench government was withdrawn in October, 1863. ouyn de Lhuys informed Dayton of this, and called tention to "the scrupulous care which the govern- ent of the Emperor brings to the observance of the les of a strict neutrality."[2]

Even Dayton did not know of Napoleon's part in en- uraging the Confederates; so the promises of the Min- er of Foreign Affairs tended to allay the fears. Sew- d dealt with this question with great moderation and cumspection. At first he merely reminded Dayton at in a similar case occurring in Great Britain, the ited States had not hesitated to declare that the parture of such an expedition would be deemed a na-

[1] Bigelow, p. 1 ff.; 2 *Dip. Cor.*, 1863, 707, 708.
[2] 2 *Dip. Cor.*, 1863, 702, 725, 727.

tional aggression justifying resistance likely to dist
amicable relations. While it was hoped that it wo
never be necessary for Dayton to say this to Fra
it was important that he should understand that
United States were "resolved not to endure the agg
sion of a French navy under a feigned insurgent fla
However, the work on the ships continued, for it
expected that Napoleon would dissemble until he
a good opportunity to let them escape. When, in
spring of 1864, Seward came to fear such an outco
he concluded to have Drouyn de Lhuys informed a
what the consequences would be.

"This government thinks that the forbearance it
hitherto practised in good faith and friendship tow
France," he wrote to Dayton, "has entitled it to ex
that the Emperor will not allow his subjects or stran
to wage war aginst us from the ports of France.

"If this reasonable expectation should be disappoin
it would seem necessary to contemplate a change of e
ing relations as a consequence which the government of
United States, however much it might be desired, wo
not have the power to prevent.

"While you are not expected to make a formal repre
tation to precisely this effect, you will at the same tim
express yourself as to leave no doubt in the mind of
French government that the President regards the q
tion now to be decided as one upon the solution of w
the relations between France and the United States for
future not improbably depend."[2]

Dayton thought the French government was try
to formulate a case against the United States so a
appear to be on the defensive and entitled to vindi
its honor. But Seward carefully explained the gr
ances complained of. Yet, seeing that Drouyn de Lh
had become less positive about preventing the war-s
from getting into the possession of the Confederates

[1] October 1, 1863. MS. [2] May 21, 1864. M

rdered careful watch to be taken of the alleged sale of he rams and the corvettes to foreign governments, and hen he caused two United States war-ships in European raters to be placed under Dayton's orders.[1]

Seward had his reasons for being so cautious. When he rst heard that the war-ships were building in France, he relations with Great Britain were for a similar reason n a very critical state. Although the likelihood of a rupt- re with Great Britain diminished during the autumn and inter of 1863–64, there was still some danger that new nd serious complications might be used as an excuse for oreign interference. On February 22, 1864, Seward wrote note to Bigelow that contained these sentences: "Before e decide what to do *more* in France, we wait to be a ttle better assured about our affairs in *England*. You an infer from this what I do not think it perfectly safe o write."[2] On the same day he replied to a letter from William M. Evarts, written in Paris: "We want to now whether, if we have a difficulty on one side of the hannel, we must expect an enemy also on the other -two enemies instead of one. Circumstances favor a ood understanding with the Cabinet at London. We ould clear up all difficulties if Great Britain should be illing."[3] It was shortly after this time that Congress ecame very excited over the Mexican question, as will oon be noticed, and the French government seemed to e almost ready for a conflict. Seward saw that we ere not prepared for a foreign war; therefore, he made special effort to pitch his despatches in a friendly one. Bigelow, who had not been fully informed as to l the perplexities of the case, very frankly told Sew-

[1] 3 *Dip. Cor.*, 1864, 115, 117; MS. instructions to Dayton, June 27, 64.

[2] Seward MSS. Possibly this letter was never sent, for it is not in c Bigelow MSS. The autograph draft is in the Seward MSS.

[3] Seward MSS.

ard that his "charming compliments to the French g
ernment," which was "doing all it can [could] to cut
throats," discouraged the opposition from attacking
Emperor, and he thought that a decisive tone would s
be necessary.[1] But in dealing with France the Secret
knew the importance of waiting, and replied:

"I regret that you think my course towards the Fre
government is too conciliatory and courteous. If our
mies succeed, as we hope, we shall have no conflict w
France, or with any foreign power. So long as our s
cess in suppressing the slavery faction at home is dou
ed abroad, we shall be in danger of war with some one
the maritime powers upon some sudden provocation.
we have war with one, we may expect to have war w
more than one. If we escape war with all, my court
to France will have done no harm. If we shall at l
through unavoidable delay here, fall under the calam
of a foreign war, it will then have come soon enough;
we shall be none the less able to meet it for all the p
dence we practised in trying to delay and, if possible,
avert it."[2]

This was certainly the perfection of logic and of di
macy.

Napoleon insisted on the disposal of all the ships
foreign nations. Only one, the *Sphinx*, finally came i
the possession of the Confederates, but this was brou
about so late that peace was declared before it co
reach American waters.

The disappointment of the Confederate diplomat
was intense. They had firmly and correctly belie
that Napoleon was in sympathy with them. Their
take was in concluding that he would, therefore, give th
substantial aid, regardless of his own interests. Benja
devoted a large part of a long despatch that he s
Slidell to a formal arraignment, under eight heads

[1] Bigelow, 42.

[2] May 21, 1864. Bigelow MS

the Emperor of the French for his unfriendly acts toward the Confederacy.[1] He made himself believe that Napoleon had promised that the ships might go to sea. But Slidell had distinctly stated that the Emperor had not committed himself to permit the sailing of the rams unless their destination could be concealed. The consent to the arming and sailing of the corvettes was given by the Minister of Marine on the representation that they were for commercial purposes, although he understood the fact.[2] But when Napoleon found that the misrepresentations were no longer a shield, he did not feel bound to stand by the Confederates in the altered circumstances. Undoubtedly his original expectation was that a turn in American affairs favorable to the Confederacy would be reached before any international question could be raised about the ships.

With Great Britain Seward had negotiated as with a drawn sword. With France he either pleaded for peace or made his warnings very mild. The result showed that his method in each case was essentially right. Neither government failed to see that there was a sword. Slidell unintentionally gave high praise to Seward when he wrote: "The two strongest powers submit to the insolent demands of the Lincoln government that their commerce may be safe on the ocean, and Mexico and Canada unmolested. And why? Because they have formed an exaggerated estimate of its capacity to do mischief."[3] Seward had caused them to make that estimate.

[1] Text in Bigelow, 161–65.

[2] Bigelow, 153.

[3] Bigelow, 160.

CHAPTER XXXIX

THE END OF THE WAR

One night in July, 1863, during the rejoicing o
the victory at Vicksburg, some paraders stopped in fr
of Seward's house, serenaded him, and called for a spee
His impromptu response displayed patriotic fervor
sentimental egotism, but it also truly represented
recent aims and his hopes for the future:

"When I saw a commotion upheaving in the stat
thought it consistent with the duty of a patriot an
Christian to avert the civil war if it was possible, an
tried to do so. If this was a weakness, I found w
seemed an instruction excusing it in the prayer of
Savior that the cup, the full bitterness of which
understood by himself alone, might pass. But I fou
also, an instruction in regard to my duty in his re
nation: 'Nevertheless, not my will but thine be do
When it was clear that without fault on your part
mine the civil war was inevitable, I then thought it
sistent with the duty of a patriot and a Christian to t
care that the war should be begun not by the friend
the Union, but by its enemies, so that in maintaining
Union we should not only maintain the cause of our co
try, but should be maintaining it in righteous self
fence." . . .

"I thought, further, that it was consistent with
duty as a patriot and a Christian to do what was in
power to render the war as light in its calamities and
short in its duration as possible. Therefore, I propose
retain on the side of the loyal states as many of the st
which were disturbed by elements of sedition as could
retained by a course of calm and judicious conduct
would have had, if possible, the insurrection confine

e seven original so-called seceding states. When all ese conditions had been secured, so far as was possible secure them, I thought still further that it was consist-t with my duty as a patriot and a Christian to combine e loyal states and consolidate them into one party for e Union, because I knew that disunion had effectually mbined the people of the disloyal states to overthrow e Union." . . .

"Once engaged in the contest, I was prepared to de-and, as I have demanded ever since, that no treasure, no nount of human life necessary to save the nation's life, ould be withheld. I thought that the war might be ded in three months—in six months—in a year—and I pored to that end. . . . We failed to make that exhibi-n [of zeal, determination, and consistency], and so the r has been protracted into its third year." . . .

"But we have reached, I think, the culminating point last; we have ascertained the amount of sacrifice which necessary to save the Union, and the country is prepared make it." . . .

. . . "The Union is to be saved, after all, only by human orts—by the efforts of the people." . . .

"You must be prepared to do more. . . . If the capital ust fall before it can be saved, which I have always ought unnecessary, and which now seems impossible, en in that case, let us be buried amid its ruins. For yself, this is my resolution. If the people of the United ates have virtue enough to save the Union, I shall have eir virtue. If they have not, then it shall be my reward at my virtue excelled that of my countrymen."[1]

The administration decided early in July, 1863, to is-e a proclamation calling for a day of thanksgiving for e great military successes that had been achieved. Its eparation was given to Seward, who sat himself down, he wrote to his wife, "to compose a presidential call on the people for thanksgiving, prayer, and praise to r Heavenly Father. I think you must have read in it d under it what I think and how I feel."[2]

5 *Works*, 485-88.

3 Seward, 176. He referred to Lincoln's proclamation of July 1863.

Shortly after the battle of Gettysburg it had been cided to secure a part of the battle-field for a cemet where the bodies of the fallen combatants might brought together in fraternal burial. In Novem 1863, the cemetery was ready for dedication. Edw Everett was the orator of the day. The President, Secretary of State, and others formed a special p from Washington. On the evening of November 1863, not long after their arrival, they were serena and Seward responded to a call for a speech. He upward of sixty years of age, he said, and had bee public life practically forty years, and this was the time the people so near the border of Maryland been willing to hear his voice. The reason was, he tinued, that forty years before he saw that sla was opening a graveyard that was to be filled brothers falling in strife. During all this period he tried to have the cause removed by constitutional me He thanked God that the people were willing to him at last, and that the strife was to end in the struction of an evil that should have been removed deliberate councils and peaceful means. He beli that thereafter we should

"be united, be only one country, having only one h one ambition, and one destiny.

"To-morrow, at least, we shall feel that we are not mies, but that we are friends and brothers, that this U is a reality, and we shall mourn together for the evil wro by this rebellion. We are now near the graves of the guided, whom we have consigned to their last resting-p with pity for their errors, and with the same heart fu grief with which we mourn over a brother by whose h raised in defence of his government, that misguided bro perished."[1]

It was on the morrow—after Everett's long and

[1] 5 *Works*, 490.

nt oration—that Lincoln uttered what is probably the iefest and most perfect patriot-speech in any language. s impressiveness was in its impersonality and in the odesty that recognized the occasion as one on which e living should "be dedicated here to the unfinished ork which they who fought here have thus far so bly advanced."

One of the wisest decisions of Seward's life was made ar the end of 1861. It was to relinquish all aspira-ns for the presidency. But it was not so easy for his litical friends to surrender their hopes. In December, 61, some of them in Philadelphia organized a "Will-n H. Seward Club" for the purpose of making him ncoln's successor. When they informed Seward of e fact he pronounced the proceeding "altogether un-se," "a partisan movement, and, worst of all, a parti-n movement of a personal character"; and he insisted at his name should be dropped "henceforth and for-er."[1] No evidence has been found to indicate that

[1] "If, when the present civil war was looming up before us," he ote, "I had cherished an ambition to attain the high position you e indicated, I should have adopted one of two courses which lay n to me—namely, either to withdraw from the public service at ne to a position of honor without great responsibility abroad, or to re to private life, and, avoiding the caprices of fortune, await the nces of public favor.

But I deliberately took another course. I renounced all ambition, came into the executive government to aid in saving the Constitu- and integrity of my country or to perish with them. I knew that ust necessarily renounce all expectation of future personal ad-tage, in order that the counsels I might give to the President in a crisis should not only be, but be recognized as being, disinter-d, loyal, and patriotic.

Acting on this principle, I shun no danger and shrink from no onsibilities. So I neither look for, nor, if it should be offered to me, uld I ever hereafter accept, any reward." .

I could never consent to be a President of a division of the Re-lic. I cheerfully give up any aspiration for rule in the whole

the Secretary ever thought of reconsidering the dec
here announced and soon made public.[1] In the sur
of 1863 John Bigelow wrote an article for a Paris r
paper, suggesting Seward's candidacy in 1864. He
sent a copy to the Secretary, and at the same tim
pressed a desire to resign. Seward's jocose and unof
answer of July 21, 1863, said:

"My dear Bigelow,—I have just received your l
of the 3d inst., and I am glad that you remain in
consulate. I suppose that I can imagine the reason
you desire to resign, and, if I do, I am the more conv
that you ought to stay at your post.

"I shall certainly report your violation of your ins
tions, by your article in the *Opinion Nationale*, to
President, though I will mercifully withhold the desc
punishment. Some good but impatient friends, as
see, are bringing his name forward for re-election. I
show you how just and generous he is in that he is ab
overlook your crime of putting me in his way, and I t
that he will only be the more decided in his conviction
you must stay where you are. As for me, I am bent
leading the way for whosoever may follow in restoring
and Union in our unhappy country, by withdrawing a
provocations to anger that are associated with my nar

The military victories of the summer of 1863 w
promise of political victories in the autumn. What
ard said in a speech in Auburn, just before the
tion, was the most positive evidence that he cher
no ambition beyond his present position as Secreta

Republic as a contribution to the efforts necessary to maintai
its integrity. I not only ask but peremptorily require my frie
whose behalf you have written to me, to drop my name, henc
and forever, from among those to whom they look as possible
dates."—3 Seward, 50. Welles erroneously asserted that this p
was not taken until after the Cabinet crisis of December, 1862.-
coln and Seward, 84, 85.

[1] New York *Herald*, March 4, 1862.

[2] Bigelow MSS. 3 Seward, 196, gives a report of a conversat
this subject, in 1863, between Lincoln and Seward.

ate: Lincoln must be *de facto* President in Georgia
d in South Carolina, just as he was in Massachusetts
d in New York, and there should be no peace and
iet until he was President of the whole United States.[1]
The result of the elections showed that the people
ere ready to support the administration even in its vig-
ous war measures, but on condition that the Fed-
al armies should win battles. During the next year
ere was a very close connection between events in
e field and the political turmoil in the North. Grant
as made lieutenant-general in March, 1864. He came
Washington and undertook a formidable campaign
ainst Richmond. Sherman was placed at the head of
e three armies that had done such hard fighting, es-
cially in Mississippi and Tennessee. He too began, in
s spring, his task of cutting the eastern part of the
nfederacy in two by sweeping through Georgia from
attanooga to Savannah. He advanced with wonder-
regularity and without serious reverses. It was not
with Grant. He believed that, with a force almost
ice as great as Lee's, his forward movement could not
resisted. The loss of thirty-six thousand men in the
lderness and about Spottsylvania during a fortnight,
May, 1864, made it plain that ultimate success was not
rely a question of numbers, momentum, and courage.
most every adult in the East counted a friend or
ative among the dead or the wounded in Virginia.
ch terrible destruction of human life led to popular dis-
ntent, which the politicians undertook to make use of.
The radical Republicans did not cease their attacks
on the administration as its antislavery policy became
re pronounced, for they kept far ahead, demanding
reme measures. Chase had endeavored to make him-
f the beneficiary of this hypercritical discontent—a

[1] 3 Seward, 195.

fact that greatly strengthens the circumstantial evid
that he had been an important factor in the anti-Sew
movement in the latter part of 1862; but he succe
merely in getting himself out of the Cabinet. The r
cal faction tried to organize a distinct party at Cl
land, on a platform that favored electing the Presi
by popular vote and making him ineligible for a sec
term, the reconstruction of the states under directio
Congress rather than of the President, and "the
fiscation of the lands of rebels and their distribu
among the soldiers and actual settlers." Frémont
appropriately chosen as their candidate.

But there was no room for an anti-administra
movement outside of the Democratic party. Lin
and Seward stood for the restoration of the U
without retracing any steps, and they were willin
aid in any new measures beneficial to this main
pose. The regular Republican convention, which
at Baltimore early in June, represented what was
and most practical in the character of Northerners.
platform was a sober appeal for help, as well as a
pression of determination to finish the solemn task
had been forced upon the Federal government. Lin
was renominated, and Andrew Johnson was name
the second place because the party desired to win
support of Democrats and southern Unionists.
public letter written a little later, Seward said e
body knew that he himself was "committed in d
to all that the convention has now done, long bef
delegate was chosen, and even long before the co
tion itself was called." And then he added: "Fo
present, let the people send men and supplies to th
tion's armies in the field, and thus enable them 'to
it out on the same line if it takes all summer.'"[1]

[1] 3 Seward, 226.

The best element in the Democratic party was supporting the administration either by service in the field or by giving it confidence and cheer at home. The partisan Democrats of 1864 were a miscellaneous horde of men, whose narrow minds were less influenced by sentiments of reasonable patriotism than by personal grievances or unworthy ambitions. They agreed among themselves in hardly anything except opposition to existing conditions and a desire to profit by every national misfortune, past, present, and future. So they postponed their convention until the end of August. Meantime, Sherman drove Johnston before him toward Atlanta; but Grant and his soldiers, like faithful oxen drawing a too heavy load in the mire, struggled on slowly, doggedly, painfully. In less than two months from the beginning of his campaign he had lost more than half of all his original troops — about sixty-two thousand out of one hundred and twenty-two thousand. By midsummer he had moved around Richmond and begun the siege of Petersburg; but the Confederate capital seemed to be as inaccessible as ever. Moreover, Washington had escaped capture, and probably flames, chiefly on account of a misapprehension. Early had rushed out of the Shenandoah Valley and down to the ill-manned forts on Washington's northern suburbs before proper defence could be made. But mistaking local recruits for a detachment of Grant's army, he delayed his advance another day, when the veterans actually appeared and blocked the way. When the Democrats met in national convention at Chicago, August 29th, they pronounced the war a failure and called for a cessation of hostilities with a view to an ultimate convention of the states. McClellan was chosen as their candidate, but he repudiated the platform. The Democrats had barely formulated their unpatriotic and impracticable policy when Atlanta fell, September 2d; it was as unwelcome as an earthquake to them.

On the following day Seward took advantage of
change in affairs to sound the key-note of the campa
in a speech at Auburn. No man not blinded by pa
sanship or prejudice could fail to see the force of s
arguments as these:

"In voting for a President of the United States, can
wisely or safely vote out the identical person whom, w
force and arms, we are fighting into the presidency? Y
justly say, No. It would be nothing else than to give
the very object of the war at the ballot-box. . . . By s
a proceeding we shall have agreed with the enemy,
shall have given him the victory. But in that agreem
the Constitution and the Union will have perished, becau
when it shall have once been proved that a minority can
force or circumvention defeat the full accession of a con
tutionally chosen President, no President thereafter, tho
elected by ever so large a majority, can hope to exercise
executive powers unopposed throughout the whole coun
. . . I therefore regard the pending presidential electio
involving the question whether, hereafter, we shall h
our Constitution and our country left us. . . . Upon th
grounds entirely, irrespective of platform and candidat
consider the recommendations of the convention at Chic
as tending to subvert the republic.

"And now," he said, near the end of his speech, "
all the treasure that has been spent, and all the preci
blood that has been poured forth, gone for nothing
but to secure an ignominious retreat, and return, at
end of four years, to the hopeless imbecility and ra
process of national dissolution which existed when A
ham Lincoln took into his hands the reins of governmen

The only possibility of victory for the Democrats
pended upon continual defeats for the Federal army;
there was no hope for them in the face of an energ
political campaign in which the Republicans were chee
on by Sheridan's successes in the Shenandoah va
and by Sherman's in Georgia. Lincoln won in all
loyal states except New Jersey, Delaware, and Kentuc

[1] 5 *Works*, 496, 501.

"It is a truism," Seward wrote in one of his despatches rly in 1865, "that in times of peace there are always stigators of war. So soon as war begins, there are tizens who impatiently demand negotiations for peace." s the exhaustion of Confederate resources increased, outherners tried harder to accomplish indirectly what uld not be brought about by force of arms. Many ortherners, too, that were opposed to Lincoln's admin-ration, believed that a voluntary peace would be the rest road to reunion. There was rarely a month, and ver a season, when some Democratic leader was not erflowing with illusory schemes for a cessation of stilities. The great mortality in the Federal army Virginia in the spring and early summer of 1864 rengthened the anti-war sentiment. Three prominent nfederates, who had found their way to Canada, con-nced Horace Greeley that they were authorized to rry on negotiations for peace. Greeley appealed to ncoln with so much zeal that the President requested m to bring the alleged commissioners to Washington case he should find that they were more than pre-nders. It turned out that Greeley was merely the tim of men scheming to embarrass the administra-n and to defeat Lincoln's re-election.

About the same time a clerical soldier in an Illinois giment, James F. Jaquess, and a journalist and author, R. Gilmore, went on an unofficial mission to Rich-nd. Jaquess represented that he had assurances that ny prominent members of the Methodist Episcopal urch of the South were opposed to Confederate aims d favored a return to the Union. The President mere-gave the two dreamers permission to pass the Federal es. They had a long interview with Davis and Ben-min, but they learned only what Lincoln felt confident already—that Davis insisted upon independence as a ecedent condition of peace.

The result of the election of 1864 proved that Linc and Grant had the confidence of the North and co command its full strength. Before the end of the y Sherman had triumphantly reached Savannah. Gr although still in front of Petersburg, was daily bec ing more formidable. It was almost certain that Confederacy could not hold out more than a few mor longer, for the great bulk of the Federal troops in East were to be concentrated about Richmond earl 1865, unless it should fall meantime. What Linco administration wanted was peace and reunion, an would have preferred to obtain them by negotia rather than by battles.

Near the end of December, 1864, Francis P. Blair, elaborated a scheme to overcome the difficulties. gist of it was that the belligerents should enter in military convention to cease hostilities between th selves, for a time at least, and devote their effort driving the French out of Mexico; that Jefferson D should command a union of Confederate, Federal, Mexican forces—be made dictator, if necessary—e "the Bonaparte-Hapsburg dynasty," establish orde Mexico, and perhaps round out the possessions of United States to the Isthmus. This would restore balance between the sections and make the South h som again with prosperity. By that time it would seen that there was really nothing more to fight ab for each side had adopted a policy toward slavery would soon bring it to an end.[1] Lincoln neither k Blair's plans nor assumed any responsibility for th but gave him the necessary pass.

The Confederate President received Blair as an acquaintance and listened with much interest to the prising propositions, for any strategy that offered a

[1] For Blair's full programme, see 10 Nicolay and Hay, 91 ff.

bility of escape from the danger threatening the Con-derate capital must not be neglected. Davis gave the isitor a written statement, to be shown to Lincoln, say-ng that he was ready to enter into a conference "with view to secure peace to the two countries." Lincoln eard Blair's report of what had taken place, and wrote im a note, to be shown to Davis, expressing his willing-ess to receive any agent sent informally and authorized consider the question of "peace to the people of our ne common country." Vice-President Stephens advised avis to meet Lincoln,[1] but the Confederate chief knew iat in such an enterprise as this there was safety in umbers. So he appointed Stephens, R. M. T. Hunter, nd John A. Campbell, then Assistant Secretary of War. he Confederates finally gave up trying to force an nplied recognition of sovereignty by referring to the two countries."

On January 31, 1865, Lincoln instructed Seward to roceed to Fortress Monroe, Virginia, "to meet and in-rmally confer with" these three commissioners. The structions were very explicit:

"You will make known to them that three things are dispensable, to wit: First. The restoration of the national thority throughout all the states. Second. No receding the Executive of the United States on the slavery ques-on from the position assumed thereon in the late annual essage to Congress, and in preceding documents. Third. o cessation of hostilities short of an end of the war, and e disbanding of all forces hostile to the government. You ll inform them that all propositions of theirs, not incon-tent with the above, will be considered and passed upon a spirit of sincere liberality. You will hear all they may oose to say, and report it to me. You will not assume definitely consummate anything."[2]

After Seward had departed Lincoln was shown a

[1] 2 Stephens's *War Between the States*, 593.
[2] 10 Nicolay and Hay, 115.

despatch from Grant in which a regret was expre
that the President was not to meet Stephens and Hun
especially, who had impressed Grant as having good
tentions and a sincere desire to restore peace and un
This persuaded the President to hurry off to take pa
the consultation. It would have been a needless risk
one man, however reserved in conversation, to carry
such a conference with these three Confederates.
haps, too, Lincoln remembered Seward's unfortunate
terviews with Campbell and Hunter, in 1861, and
Mercier a year later.

What is known as the "Hampton Roads Conferen
on account of the place where it occurred, was on bo
the Federal ship *River Queen*, February 3, 1865. It
on the Mexican scheme that the Confederates were
ing their hopes. Stephens soon asked if there was
some side issue that could be used to divert the atten
of the two sections until passions might cool—some
tinental question, after the solution of which they w
be in a more amicable mood for adjusting difficu
among themselves. Lincoln understood the meanin
this reference, and explained that he was not respons
for what Blair had said; that he himself adhered
the declaration that a restoration of the Union w
prerequisite to any agreement whatever. Still, belie
that the Mexican project was not positively ba
Stephens spoke of the hostility of the United State
the French invasion and of their desire to enforce
Monroe doctrine. He understood this to mean that
North would support the right of self-governmen
all peoples on the American continent, against the
minion or control of any European power. Could
pledge make a permanent restoration of the Union
certain than it would be after this doctrine had
asserted in regard to Mexico? Lincoln repeated
he had said about having nothing to do with an a

ice or with any proposition that did not involve the estoration of the Federal authority throughout the vhole country. Campbell then thought it time to introluce another question, but Seward was so interested in Stephens's speculations that he wanted to hear them deeloped further; for, as he said, they had "a philosophial basis."[1] It was to be expected that the very marked esemblance between Stephens's idea as expressed so far nd the one Seward had advanced April 1, 1861, would nterest the Secretary. But Seward's aim was to preserve he Union, whereas Stephens's plan was primarily to stablish the principle of local self-government and the ight of secession. This would have been a vindication -in the eyes of all Confederates, at least—of the aims f the South, although Stephens hoped that an "oceanound Federal Republic" would come into existence under the operation of this *Continental Regulator*—the ltimate absolute Sovereignty of each State."[2] Moral uasion and self-interest were to be the only cohesive orces. Seward easily exploded the theory by pointing ut that according to it Louisiana might shut up the Mississippi. Stephens had to admit that in case of anton injustice on the part of a state, coercion might e used. Still Seward wanted to continue the speculation about the Mexican question, and he inquired as o how the Confederates expected to make their suggestions practical. This brought out the fact that the ommissioners had neither the authority nor the wish o pledge Confederate military support to the effort to verthrow European influence in Mexico.[3] The trap as thereby exposed.

Evidently Seward was desirous of peace, and very aturally; for, if he could have been instrumental in inging it about now, it would be a great compensa-

[1] 2 Stephens, 603. [2] 2 Stephens, 604. [3] 2 Stephens, 608.

tion for his disappointment in the spring of 1861. Th Confederates had not heard that Congress had ju proposed the XIII. Amendment. Seward at least su gested that if the states in secession would prompt resume their old places, they might defeat the ado tion of the amendment. Both he and Lincoln expresse their willingness to favor a plan for compensating th South for her slaves. It was thought that the Nor would prefer such an indemnity rather than expend th money in prosecuting the war. Lincoln said that son Northerners had mentioned as much as four million do lars for this peaceful purpose.

Beyond the point of submission to the laws, and stan ing by what had already been done, the President pro ised to act with liberality in all matters that fell with his constitutional powers. But again and again he can back to his wise declaration that no agreement wou be entered into until after the Confederates had la down their arms. Hunter undertook to show that the was a precedent for such an agreement in the negoti tions between Charles I. and the Roundheads. It w then that Lincoln gave the answer, as characteristic himself as it was of his attitude toward Seward: "I d not profess to be posted in history. On all such ma ters I turn you over to Seward. All I distinctly recolle about the case of Charles I. is that he lost his head the end."[1] After a session of four hours the conferre concluded that there was no possibility of reaching an agreement.

The Confederates returned in sadness and anger their capital, still unwilling to believe that Lincoln ha never intended to offer some such terms as Blair ha suggested. Stephens soon withdrew to the quiet of h Georgia home, as if to escape being crushed beneath

[1] 2 Stephens, 613.

ructure that he foresaw must soon fall. But Davis, ho had courage, enterprise, and daring suitable for so esperate a cause, made the most of every circumstance. ublic meetings were held, at which he and other im- ressive orators aroused the passions and determination f the people until all came to believe that victory was ill within their reach.

The North soon learned the chief facts about the con- erence. Although it had failed in one sense, it was ery successful in another: it convinced all sensible men iat the peace demanded could only be obtained by a iorough conquest.

Already Sherman's vast devastating flood was sweep- g northward from Savannah. Nothing but fear of the opular effect of abandoning Richmond had caused the overnment to hold out so desperately against the Fed- al forces, which were working successfully on the plan strangulation. On the night of April 2d, Petersburg id Richmond were abandoned, and the army and the overnment officials, with the archives, hurried off south- estward, hoping to make a successful stand on reaching e Blue Ridge mountains, if not before. But Sheridan t off Lee's retreat. After quickly occupying Peters- irg and Richmond, Grant followed up and surrounded ee. The end came at Appomattox Court House April 1865. What followed was merely gathering up the attered fragments.

During the two months since the meeting at Hampton oads, Seward had watched the course of events with eat satisfaction. "Our foreign relations are closing up iely," he wrote home, shortly after the conference. is pen was not less active than formerly, for he was diting long despatches about the numerous military gagements. He could write a smooth, clear story of hatever occurred in the field, and the pleasure he found

in keeping an open diary on the war led him to g
much time and labor to it. What afforded him the n
satisfaction was to mark the growing disorder and
peration in Richmond:

"The dismay at Richmond rises to distraction. I
not doubtful that there has been a conspiracy to f
Davis to resign." "It is understood that the insurrect
ary cabal has at last, under Virginia's dictation, passe
bill for arming slaves — leaving to the states the quest
whether the negroes thus brought into the field shal
emancipated." "The so-called Congress, on the eve o
intended adjournment, was detained by a message f
Davis, announcing that Richmond is in imminent dan
and demanding extreme measures and virtually dictato
powers, includiug a suspension of the *habeas corpus*,
limited control over exemptions, and authority to seize
for the uses of the rebel authorities. The so-called le
lature listened and adjourned, as is understood, withou
viewing the policy of which Davis complained, and witl
conceding the most, much less all, of the extraordi
powers demanded."[1]

On a bright spring afternoon, April 5, 1865, Sew
went for a drive with his daughter, one of her frie
and his son Frederick. The horses became frighte
and the Secretary, in attempting to get out of
carriage, was thrown to the ground with great force.
was picked up unconscious; his jaw was broken in
places; his right shoulder was badly dislocated,
nearly his whole body was bruised and strained.
jaw was set in an iron frame, and in every way h
ceived the best scientific care. Nevertheless, he rema
unconscious for several hours and then was delirious
many more. Fever set in, and there were serious do
as to his recovery. But in a few days favorable s
appeared.

Lincoln was absent on a visit to Grant's army w

[1] 3 Seward, 266, 267, 268.

e accident occurred. On his return he went to see ward. Sitting on the bed by the invalid, he quietly scribed what he had seen in and about the late capital the Confederacy. Seward could not even whisper thout great pain. So the monologue was continued soft tones for an hour or so, until Seward fell asleep; en the President quietly slipped away. They never w each other again.

About ten o'clock in the evening of April 14th, when ward's sick-room had been put in order for the night, unknown man rang the door-bell and told the ser- nt that he brought a message from the physician. s there was nothing suspicious about him, he was al- ved to pass up-stairs; but at Seward's door he was fused admission by Frederick W. Seward. The stranger ed in vain to fire his revolver, and then savagely beat e Assistant Secretary over the head with it, until the apon broke. Then bursting open the door, he rushed the Secretary, striking furious blows at his head and roat with a bowie-knife, until Seward rolled from the ner side of the bed to the floor. The male nurse, who ed to protect the Secretary, received some bad cuts, d so did Augustus Seward, who undertook to expel the assin. As the assailant was leaving he wounded a h man, and then rode off on the horse he had left ar the front door. Seward's throat had been "cut on th sides, his right cheek nearly severed from his face." obably it was the iron frame on his jaw that turned low that might have caused instant death. As it was, e chances seemed to be that either the wounds or the rible shock would be fatal.[1] The life of the Assistant cretary was despaired of, for his skull was badly fract- ed in two places. At nearly the precise moment of

[1] For a full account of Seward's accident and attempted assassina- , and of the fate of Powell, alias Payne, see 3 Seward, 270 ff., and Nicolay and Hay, 303 ff.

the assault upon Seward, Lincoln was shot whil
Ford's theatre, and he died early the following m
ing.

As far back as June, 1862, John Bigelow had writte
Seward from Paris about a rumored plot to assassinat
President and some of his Cabinet. In a letter of
15, 1862, Seward replied as follows:

"There is no doubt that from a period anterior to
breaking out of the insurrection, plots and conspiracie
purposes of assassination have been frequently formed
organized. And it is not unlikely that such an one a
been reported to you is now in agitation among the in
gents. If it be so it need furnish no ground for anx
Assassination is not an American practice or habit, and
so vicious and desperate cannot be engrafted into our
litical system.

"This conviction of mine has steadily gained stre
since the Civil War began. Every day's experience
firms it. The President, during the heated season, occu
a country-house near the Soldiers' Home, two or t
miles from the city. He goes to and comes from
place on horseback, night and morning, unguarded.
there unattended at all hours, by daylight and by moonl
by starlight and without any light."[1]

Seward had a philosophical theory for everythin
wished to believe. But, alas! the unexpected happe
Fortunately, the five men wounded at his hous
covered.

[1] Bigelow MSS.

CHAPTER XL

EWARD'S ATTITUDE TOWARD FRENCH INTERVENTION IN MEXICO

SEWARD'S treatment of Napoleon's attempt to overrow a republican form of government in Mexico and place in its stead an imperial throne with an Austrian ince was his most perfect achievement in diplomacy. o other question in his department was for a long me so puzzling, so changing, so dangerous, or so misdged by the people and the public men of the United ates. No mere accident, no circumstance, no fortune, od or ill, could have given Seward success; one or all these might have helped, but a genius for diplomacy as necessary.

Ever since the Spanish yoke had been thrown off, in 21, Mexico had been subject to revolution and counterolution, generally led by some chief of either the Libal or the Clerical party. In forty years there had been arly forty revolutions and over seventy different sueme executives. Government was hardly more than name. Assaults and murders were frequent in the pital, guerilla warfare was common in the provinces, d banditti infested the highways. Even the British gation had been robbed of about six hundred thousand llars in coin. So insufferable had become the outrages on foreigners that the French and the English Ministers idly protested; and President Buchanan, in his last nual message, recommended intervention on the part the United States to obtain indemnity. In 1861 the

constitutional President was Benito Juarez. He wa
full-blooded Indian, but a man of character, energy,
extraordinary attainments. Although Miramon,
leader of the Church party, had been completely defea
and had fled from Mexico, leaving the party with
organization, yet plotting did not cease. Juarez
the Liberals about him had some honest and statesm
like purposes, but they had not the power to rest
order or to correct abuses. England, France, Spain,
the United States had claims against Mexico amount
to more than eighty million dollars, but Mexican fi
ces were in a chaotic state. The annual governme
expenses alone exceeded the revenue by nearly a mil
dollars. In July, 1861, the Mexican Congress sou
temporary relief by passing an act suspending for
years the payment of all foreign debts. This brou
matters to a crisis.

The question as to how to compel Mexico to res
her obligations had often been discussed. Engl
France, and Spain now decided to take matters
their own hands. Aside from the grievances c
plained of by these powers, each had its notion of
probable results of intervention. Spain had not
become fully reconciled to the loss of her Amer
colonies, and she thought of a throne for a Bour
prince. England very reasonably believed that no in
vention should go beyond the point of seeking red
for actual injuries.[1] France had several aims which
soon be noticed. On the 31st of October, 1861, these t
powers signed a convention in London, by which t
agreed to demand jointly from Mexico "more efficac
protection for the persons and properties of their subj
as well as a fulfilment of the obligations contracted
ard their Majesties." Article second of the conven
read:

[1] 2 Earl Russell's *Speeches and Despatches*, 484.

"The high contracting parties engage not to seek for themselves, in the employment of the coercive measures contemplated by the present convention, any acquisition of territory nor any special advantage, and not to exercise in the internal affairs of Mexico any influences of a nature to prejudice the right of the Mexican nation to choose and to constitute freely the form of its government."[1]

Toward the end of 1861 naval ships of Spain, France, and England sailed for Vera Cruz with the avowed intention of taking possession of the custom-houses of two or three of the Mexican ports, for the purpose of satisfying the claims of their respective governments.

Within a few weeks after the arrival of these ships, and before the allies had done much more than seize Vera Cruz, the English and the Spanish leaders became dissatisfied with the actions, and suspicious of the intentions, of the French. The English and the Spanish forces withdrew in April, 1862, after an agreement had been reached with Mexico as to the claims of their governments. The triple alliance was dissolved, and the French were left with a free hand.

The three European powers had not only agreed among themselves not to prejudice "the right of the Mexican nation to choose and constitute freely the form of its government," but they had invited the United States to join them in compelling Mexico to respect her obligations. It was in the midst of the excitement over the *Trent* affair that the United States had to deal with this problem. To protest against the action of the powers would have made it easy for Great Britain to obtain the sympathy, and perhaps the support, of France and Spain in case of a war on account of that incident. Moreover, the precise significance of the Mexican expedition was not yet known. So Seward indicated that the

[1] H. R. Exec. Doc. No. 100, 37th Cong., 2d sess., pp. 136, 137.

United States would stand aloof. They declined become a party to the London convention, chiefly two excellent reasons: they preferred to adhere to traditional policy, which forbade alliances with fore nations; and, secondly, they did not feel inclined resort to forcible remedies for claims at that time, w Mexico was deeply disturbed by factions within and war with foreign nations.[1] In the same communica in which these reasons were set forth, Seward vo teered the statement that

"the President does not feel himself at liberty to quest and he does not question, that the sovereigns represen have [the] undoubted right to decide for themselves fact whether they have sustained grievances, and to re to war with Mexico for the redress thereof, and have right also to levy war severally or jointly."

From beginning to end the Mexican expedition was strangest scheme of the Second Empire. Like many the enterprises of Napoleon III., if not too grand for mulation before execution, it was, at least, too absurd explanation subsequently. His political aims really t precedence to what were known as French "grievanc The Italian war had left him many perplexing questi Austria bore him much ill-will. The Pope had not gotten how Napoleon III. had injured his temp power. The French Republicans threatened to inter with the so-called *grande politique impériale*. Leav out of consideration the promptings of Napoleon's balanced ambition, the Mexican revolution seemed present just the opportunity to appease Austria, to ind the Holy Father to smile benignly, and to reduce Republicans at home to a patriotic hush or to an odi opposition. Nor was commercial France forgotten. the United States were occupied in a great civil w

[1] Doc. 100, p. 189.

apoleon thought he saw a chance to prevent their eponderance in trade in the western hemisphere, by ying in Mexico the foundations of French supremacy, as to turn the tide of race predominance in the Amer- as in favor of the Latins, as he said.

After the English and the Spanish retired from Vera uz the French soon showed that they had never in- nded to be bound by the London convention. In the ost summary manner France presented her ultimatum Mexico in the shape of a claim for twenty-seven million llars: twelve millions were demanded as an indemnity r injuries that French subjects claimed to have suffered, t France would not deign to itemize the claims; and e remaining fifteen millions were for government bonds ich the revolutionary Clerical government of Miramon d given to Jecker, a Swiss banker, for seven hundred d fifty thousand dollars in cash, by the aid of which nad been hoped that the constitutional government of arez might be overthrown. Payment being an im- ssibility, as the French well knew long before, they gan a forced march toward the City of Mexico. On proaching Puebla the vanguard lost two thousand men. the town itself they met with a most humiliating re- se. Thereupon large reinforcements were called for, d in a few months the French army amounted to about rty-five thousand men. In May, 1863, Puebla finally into the hands of the French, and early in June they mphantly entered the Mexican capital.

It was plain that Napoleon intended to overthrow the xican republic. The commander of the expedition, neral Forey, and the French Minister, Saligny, took tters into their own hands. They selected a junta, or visional government, composed of thirty-five mem- s, who chose three Regents as an executive head, and r named an Assembly of Notables of two hundred and een persons. With hardly an exception, the members

of this improvised government were enemies of the
stitutional President, Juarez. In accordance with
programme, the Assembly met in July, 1863, and with
debate, and with only two voices in the negative, vo
that an empire should be established; that the thr
should be offered to the Archduke Maximilian of Aust
brother of Francis Joseph; and that if he should dec
it, the Emperor of the French should be asked to fill
vacancy. Maximilian expressed his willingness to
cept the offer if a Mexican plebiscite should resul
his favor, and if he could obtain from other sou
guaranties of the protection of Mexico. During
next year the imperial army, composed mainly of Fre
soldiers, forced many of the smaller cities and villa
of Mexico to surrender to the new government. By
spring of 1864 all doubt had been settled in the m
of Maximilian, and his scruples in favor of a nati
plebiscite were satisfied without an actual vote. On
day Maximilian finally accepted the crown, April
1864, a convention was entered into between Fra
and the new imperial government, by which Me
agreed to pay the French claims and the past and
ure cost of the intervention, under certain conditi
and France practically guaranteed to Maximilian
military protection.[1] In June, 1864, Maximilian I. m
a brilliant entry into the City of Mexico. His p
and sentimental mind was filled with generous thoug
for he really hoped to regenerate his adopted cour
But his throne rested on the shoulders of the Fre
troops.

It was late in March, 1862, when the Departmen
State received its first definite information of the ain
the French. This was about the time McClellan

[1] 3 *Dip. Cor.*, 1864, 74, 75.

enced his Peninsular campaign. If Seward had then ken a firm and defiant attitude toward France, Napoleon ould have foreseen that his own expedition and the cause the Union could not both succeed. He might have rned the scales either way, and we know what his de- ion would have been. However, had Seward preserved ence, it would have been very difficult for him to object er. See how diplomatically he chose a middle course:

"You will intimate to Mr. Thouvenel that rumors of this nd [that France is a party to the scheme to 'subvert the ublican American system in Mexico'] have reached the esident and awakened some anxiety on his part. You ll say that you are not authorized to ask explanations, t you are sure that if any can be made, which will be culated to relieve that anxiety, they will be very welcome, omuch as the United States desire nothing so much as maintain a good understanding and the most cordial re- ions with the government and the people of France.

"It will hardly be necessary to do more in assigning ur reasons for this proceeding on your part than to say at we have more than once, and with perfect distinctness l candor, informed all the parties to the alliance that we not look with indifference upon any armed European ervention for political ends in a country situated so near l connected with us so closely as Mexico."[1]

urlow Weed understood both the requirements and ward's aims, and wrote from Paris, in April, 1862: Your despatch on Mexican matters breaks no eggs. It kes a record, and there, I hope, you are at rest."[2] e immediate danger was avoided without closing the estion. Subsequently Seward made it plain why he sired to defer the discussion: "Nations no more than lividuals can wisely divide their attention upon many jects at one time."[3] While France was frequently errogated, and was permitted to infer that Seward

[1] Instructions to Dayton, March 31, 1862. Doc. 100, p. 218.
[2] 3 Seward, 85.
[3] *Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 471.

thought her avowals and actions not altogether co
tent, he never seemed to question her sincerity.
knowing what the United States could afford to risl
Mexico, he discreetly awaited events.

However, the aims of the conquering French a
were notorious. Because Seward knew that the Mexi
would not choose Maximilian, he must have seen
the French were intending to violate the Monroe
trine. In April, 1863, Dayton reported that Drouy
Lhuys had informed him that the French troops ex
ed to take the capital, establish order there, repay th
selves for debts, expenses, etc.; that sources of Mex
wealth, such as mines, if properly worked, would r
all claims. Dayton thought that this showed the int
ed policy, and he was right; that if France kept
sides of the account it would require long possessio
fore the profits of the adventure would fully settle
balance.[1] A little later he was assured that there
no intention to colonize Mexico or to occupy So
or any other section permanently. Dayton then
Drouyn de Lhuys that the government of the Un
States would not interfere in any way with the
between France and Mexico.[2] Seward approved
Dayton had said, and pronounced it "as truthful
was considerate and proper."[3] A private and un
lished letter of September 9, 1863, to John Bige
said:

"We are too intent on putting down our own insurrec
and avoiding complications which might embarrass u
seek for occasion of dispute with any foreign power.
not know, but I think it reasonable to presume, tha
Emperor finds the difficulty of his administration suffi
to employ him, without inviting any unnecessary diffi
with the United States. I may be wrong in the latter

[1] 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1863, 656. [2] 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1863,
[3] *Dip. Cor.*, 1863, 665.

ıt, if I am, there is likely to be time enough for us to ange our course after discovering the error."[1]

The great advantage of Seward's attitude was mani- ıted by the result of an interview between Dayton d Drouyn de Lhuys in September, 1863. The report d been widely circulated in France that the United ıtes only awaited the termination of their domestic ubles to drive the French out of Mexico. "The French turally conclude that if they are to have trouble with it would be safest to choose their own time," Dayton ote.[2] With this idea in view, the Emperor had inquired his Minister of Foreign Affairs if the United States d made a formal protest against the action of France Mexico. But as no such protest had been made, and as e United States had not assumed a position that was sitively hostile, Napoleon saw no need of changing his licy.

Toward the end of the year 1863 Drouyn de Lhuys imated that if the United States would early recog- e the proposed empire such action would be agreeable France and would hasten the withdrawal of her ops. Seward's answer must have been as unsatis- tory as it was adroit. He said that the United States re determined to err, if at all, on the side of strict ıtrality in the war between France and Mexico; that ey were still of the opinion that the permanent estab- ıment of a foreign or monarchical government in xico would be found neither easy nor desirable; and t the United States could not do otherwise than leave e destinies of Mexico in the keeping of her own peo- , and recognize their sovereignty and independence in atever form they themselves should choose.[3]

Bigelow MSS. This designation will be used for citations from ıy unpublished letters that Seward wrote to John Bigelow, who gen- ısly gave the author access to them.

2 *Dip. Cor.*, 1863, 699.

3 2 *Dip. Cor.*, 1863, 726.

These statements were doubtless intended to con
the impression that the United States would not inv
the Monroe doctrine, which had already been viola
The most Seward did at this time was to point out t
if France should adopt a course in Mexico adverse
American opinions and sentiments, it "would proba
scatter seeds which would be fruitful of jealousies, wh
might ultimately ripen into collision between Fra
and the United States and other American republics.

Congress and the newspapers could not underst
the wisdom of employing all the resources of the
tion against the almost invincible Confederacy be
seeking formidable enemies abroad. They had gr
contempt for what they styled Seward's cowardice.
January, 1864, McDougal, of California, introduced
the Senate a series of resolutions declaring it to be
duty of the government of the United States to req
France to remove her armed forces from Mexico;
the resolutions further called for the negotiation o
treaty by which the government should engage to
vent the possible interposition of any of the Europ
powers in Mexican affairs.[2] In a confidential, unpublis
despatch of February 8, 1864, Seward foretold that th
would

"be a legislative demonstration against the establishm
of a foreign government and a monarchy in Mexico. C
the influence of executive moderation holds the pop
action under restraint now. The President thinks
should know these facts. But you are left the free exer
of your discretion, how and when to use them."

Fortunately some prudent men in the Senate cau
these resolutions to be laid on the table. But in A
the House declared unanimously that it would not

[1] 2 *Dip. Cor.*, 1863, 711. See *ibid.*, 713, for a positive deni
meditating a future war against France.

[2] McPherson's *History of the Rebellion*, 348, 349.

rd with the policy of the United States to acknowl-
ge a monarchical government erected on the ruins of
republican government in America under the auspices
any European power.[1] Dayton reported that the Eu-
pean press inferred from this that either France or the
ited States would soon have to make a change of pol-
.[2] When he called on Drouyn de Lhuys, shortly after
e report of these resolutions reached Paris, the first
rds of the French Minister were: "Do you bring us
ace, or bring us war?"[3]

Seward had already taken the precaution to inform
yton that the extravagant opinions entertained at the
pitol were "not in harmony with the policy of neu-
lity, forbearance, and consideration which the President
s so faithfully pursued."[4] After the passage of the
use resolution, Seward caused the French government
be reminded that the question of the attitude toward
xico was an executive one, unless two-thirds of both

McPherson, 349.

[2] April 22, 1864. MS.

3 *Dip. Cor.*, 1864, 76.

January 12, 1864. MS. In an unpublished confidential letter of
5, 1864, to Bigelow, he wrote:

"The war of the French against Mexico is, of course, a source of
tinued irritation. The House of Representatives responds prompt-
a popular impulse, which is as strong as it is universal. Never-
ess, it will be seen in this case, as it was in the affair of the *Trent*,
the nation can act with all the circumspection and deliberation
ch a regard to its condition of distraction, civil war, and social
lution requires.

I might say to you confidentially, if it were entirely wise to say
thing unnecessary, that those who are most impatient for the
at of European and monarchical designs in Mexico might well be
ent to abide the effects which must result from the ever-increasing
ansion of the American people westward and southward. Five
s, ten years, twenty years hence, Mexico will be opening herself as
rfully to American immigration as Montana and Idaho are now.
at European power can then maintain an army in Mexico capable
esisting the martial and moral influences of emigration?"—Bigelow
S.

houses should formulate a different policy; that the P dent did not then contemplate a departure from the co hitherto pursued; and that in any case France woul seasonably apprised of any change.[1] But for such larations as these—in opposition to the prevalent opi of the people of the United States—it is practically tain that Napoleon would have felt compelled to st at the Federal government while it was weak, and w he was still master of affairs at home and in Mexico

Seward's purpose during the years 1863 and 1864 to avoid the active disfavor of France, but still to her informed that her intervention in the affairs of ico was not approved. The only heed he gave to popular clamor against Napoleon was to make sp efforts to prevent it from disturbing his plans, whil held firmly to his belief that the destinies of the A ican continent were not to be permanently controlle political arrangements made in the capitals of Eu John Bigelow, knowing the possible opposition to Emperor that might be encouraged in France, but able, at so great a distance, to see all the complica elsewhere, had urged Seward to be more outspoke regard to both Mexico and the ships. In an unpubli letter marked "private, unofficial, and confidential," of which has already been quoted,[2] the Secretary rep May 21, 1864:

"I think, with deference to your opinion, which ways hold in great respect, that, with our land and forces in Louisiana retreating before the rebels inste marching toward Mexico, this is not the most sui time we could choose for offering idle menaces to the peror of France. We have compromised nothing, su dered nothing, and I do not propose to surrender thing. But why should we gasconade about Mexico we are in a struggle for our own life? You tell me of

[1] 3 *Dip. Cor.*, 1865, 356, 357.

[2] See *ante*, p.

the legislative chambers of France, and support in the ress of Paris. I appreciate and am grateful for both, but hat would they avail us if we should give the French overnment a ground to appeal, in the midst of our civil ar, to French and English jealousy against the United tates? It would avail us just as much as German re-ublicanism avails now in Prussia to hold in check the ing and Count Bismarck. On the other hand, do you uppose the American people are in a temper to forgive administration that should suffer the country to fall to a foreign war upon a contingent and merely specula-ve issue like that of the future of Mexico?"

"Party politicians," he wrote again, June 6, 1864, "think at the Mexican question affords them a fulcrum, and ey seem willing to work their lever reckless of dangers the country. Can anybody mistake the isolated and inful condition of England? Can anybody doubt that results from making foreign questions the basis of parti-n action? So far we have escaped only this complication our great trial. I hope we shall continue to steer clear it."[1]

After the summer of 1864 the fortunes of Napoleon d of poor Maximilian did not brighten. The Liberal rty in Mexico had confiscated most of the enormous ssessions of the Catholic Church. It was the Cleri-l party that had brought about foreign intervention, ith the confident expectation that thereby the lost hes of the church could be regained. Probably Na-leon had given assurances encouraging this expecta-n; but the French found that much of this property d fallen into the hands of their fellow-citizens. Max-ilian was pre-eminently a Catholic prince; and, it was sumed, he would champion the cause of his church. t he sincerely sought to conciliate all parties. As a sult he received the full support of none. Many of e Clericals were soon denouncing Napoleon and Max-ilian as bitterly as were any of the Liberals, and the

[1] Both letters are in the Bigelow MSS.

Liberals would never yield to an emperor. Moreov
neither Maximilian nor any of his trusted friends p
sessed executive ability. Able men would have org
ized a new financial system, but Maximilian had
depend upon the French budget as much as upon t
French troops. Despite all these and other threateni
signs, Napoleon was not free to abandon Maximili
In an unpublished part of a despatch of March 17, 18
to Bigelow, Seward said: "I remain, however, of t
opinion I have often expressed, that even this vexatio
Mexican question in the end will find its solution wi
out producing a conflict between the United States a
France. The future of Mexico is neither an immedi
nor even a vital question for either the United Sta
or France. For both of them it is a foreign affair, a
therefore time and reason may be allowed their full
fluence in its settlement."

The conclusion of the Civil War removed the great
elements of danger for the United States. If Sewar
declarations had been merely a matter of prudence,
would have changed his attitude with the return of pea
For four years he had been very successfully practisi
the art of diplomacy with France. During most of th
time he kept her so perfectly balanced between her ho
and her fears in regard to the United States that she
many a good opportunity slip; and by philosophiz
about "the traditional friendship" between the t
countries he helped to prevent Great Britain and Fra
from forming closer relations. This was much, but
knew that the criterion of his powers as a diploma
would be to get the French out of Mexico peaceab
It was known that Napoleon was pledged to supp
Maximilian for a much longer time than had as
elapsed. To desert his puppet now would be not o
faithless and expensive, but it would also give the Fre

epublicans a chance to heap ridicule and contempt upon e Emperor.[1] It was clear to Seward that threats, or mmary proceedings along the Rio Grande, might easily represented to the French people as an insult to themves, and then the whole nation would rise in its anger, d Napoleon would cover the failure of his original hemes and make himself popular in a patriotic war. So, on June 3, 1865, Seward wrote to John Bigelow, o had become Dayton's successor:

"The policy of the administration of the late President, respect to France and Mexico, is well known to Mr. ouyn de Lhuys. It was fully and frankly made known communications from this department. You are aurized to inform Mr. Drouyn de Lhuys, that that policy undergone no change by the change of administration, will be continued as heretofore."[2]

is was a very important announcement. For more an a year there had been a growing sentiment in favor turning the veterans of the Civil War against the ench troops in Mexico. The idea appealed to a sense resentment against Europeans, which was common ong both politicians and military men. Already some ited States soldiers, after their release from service, d crossed into Mexico and joined Juarez's republican ces; but Seward believed that in no event could the istments amount to a sufficient number of men to e ground for the least uneasiness to either France or xico."[3] Apparently he expected to pursue his course thout serious opposition, but he had not yet reckoned h Lieutenant-General Grant.

Grant, as he himself wrote in his *Memoirs*, had looked on the European invasion of Mexico "as a direct of war against the United States by the powers

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1864, 74, 75, quotes the convention between Napoleon Maximilian. [2] Bigelow MSS. [3] *Ibid.*

engaged, and supposed, as a matter of course, that
United States would treat it as such when their ha
were free to strike."[1] He considered this task so m
a part of his duties as practical head of the ar
that it never occurred to him to get distinct and
instructions in regard to it any more than on his ot
important plans. Sheridan was sent to southwest
Texas to subdue the Confederates still holding
under Kirby Smith, and to menace the imperial fo
in Mexico by distributing United States soldiers
munitions of war along the Rio Grande.[2] Stranger
were Grant's instructions of July 25, 1865, to Sheri
about the part to be played by General Schofield.[3] Sc
field was given a leave of absence for twelve months
order, as he himself said, "to organize in Mexican te
tory an army corps under commissions from the gove
ment of Mexico, the officers and soldiers to be taken f
the Union and Confederate forces, who were reported
be eager to enlist in such an enterprise."[4] The p
was that veterans of the Civil War, when mustered
should cross the Rio Grande with their arms and eq
ments as well as with the ordnance and ordnance st
along that river, and join Schofield's standard for
purpose of expelling the French. Schofield believed t
all the members of the government expected that fo
would be necessary to settle the question with Fran

[1] 2 Grant's *Memoirs*, 545. Sumner's account of Grant's ideas
plans is given in 4 Pierce, 255.

[2] 2 Grant's *Memoirs*, 546. "General Grant was not content
the frequent and earnest expression of his opinion in regard to
the action of his government should be; he ordered troops to
frontier, not only for readiness to march into Mexico in case
should be declared, but apparently to provoke hostilities, and
make war between the two countries unavoidable."—McCull
Men and Measures of Half a Century, 387.

[3] Text in Schofield's *Forty-six Years in the Army*, 380–82.

[4] Schofield, 380.

It is all but certain that this expectation would have een realized within a few months, perhaps within a w weeks, if Seward had not cleverly disorganized the hole undertaking by flattering its chief into believ- g that his services were needed at once in the field of iplomacy. Schofield was requested to meet Seward at ape May. There the soldier, after four years of the ard fare of war, could look out upon the ocean and ream of important interviews and banquets at the uileries. The perfection of the strategy is shown by e fact that Schofield did not think it remarkable that ch shrewd diplomatists as Seward and Bigelow needed s aid. And Seward was supposed to be perfectly seri- s when he said: "I want you to get your legs under apoleon's mahogany and tell him he must get out of exico."[1] Schofield was kept waiting for more than o months and then sent off to Paris, where he was lowed to remain and do some feasting in the outer cir- e of court and military society until May, 1866, when, he unsuspectingly and solemnly says: "The condition the Franco-Mexican question at the time of my return om Europe gave no further occasion for my offices in ther of the ways which had been contemplated in be- lf of Mexico."[2] The soldier had done no harm in diplo- acy, where he had no important authority; Seward d Bigelow had been laughing in their sleeves.[3]

[1] Schofield, 385. [2] Schofield, 393.

[3] For Sheridan's views as to how Seward lost a "golden oppor- nity" for war, and as to "the slow and poky methods of our State partment," see his 2 *Personal Memoirs*, 214–17.

Parts of some of Seward's unpublished private letters to Bigelow ow not only how little assistance the two diplomatists needed, but o how careful Seward had been to keep the question within the do- in of negotiation:

June 17, 1865: "Circumstances indicate a growing disposition in ne quarters of the country to find or make a *casus belli* with a view the political situation in Mexico. I think it would be well for you

Seward had meantime become more peremptory
France. In a long despatch of September 6, 186
said, in substance: For many years there has be
traditional friendship between France and the Un
States that has been cherished quite regardless of p
cal conditions in either country. The United St
favor republican institutions on the American contin
French intervention in Mexico has been antagonist
this position and has tended to prevent the republ
sovereignty of Mexico from asserting itself. France
the United States have armies confronting each othe
the Mexican border; and although the two forces

in an informal and confidential manner to let the French govern
understand the great importance, as we think, of the practice on
part, of the most just and friendly disposition towards the U
States by the French authorities in Mexico, as well as in the sh
of French policy towards that country.

"Prompt and punctual attention to this subject will be of ess
importance."

July 1, 1865: "Parties are organizing here for ulterior po
action. It is unmistakable that immediate enforcement of
suffrage upon the states which rebelled, by the conquering loyal s
is to be the platform of one, and decided and initiatory action to
France in regard to Mexico another."

July 14, 1865: "I need hardly point out the movements mad
indicative of a defiant spirit about Mexican affairs. I may, how
properly tell you that they find much favor in the army, and yo
well aware how popular the army deservedly is at this moment.
gress will soon be in session and then we may expect debate
party organizations.

"Fully informed you will act wisely and discreetly."

July 24, 1865: "There are unmistakable signs that the Me
embroglio is to be made a subject for excitement and party c
tions. Nothing will satisfy the nervous but vehemence on th
of this government. The complications grow more formidable
day."

August 7, 1865: "I hope that you clearly foresee what is c
to be the temper of Congress and of political conventions i
country in regard to Mexico, and that you do not in any way
hold the information from Mr. Drouyn de Lhuys."

eretofore practised prudence, "a time seems to have ome when both nations may well consider whether the ermanent interests of international peace and friendship o not require the exercise of a thoughtful and serious tention to the political questions to which I have thus dverted."[1]

On November 6th another step in advance was taken. eward declared that Maximilian's government was in rect antagonism to the fundamental policy and prinple of that of the United States. Therefore, he said, ey were not prepared to recognize it then, or to promse to recognize any similar government later.[2] It is not range that the French Minister of Foreign Affairs rearked, after Bigelow had finished reading the despatch, at its contents gave him neither pleasure nor satisction.[3] Still Napoleon could not accept this as final d withdraw, for the stronger the language of the nited States the stronger the moral demand upon e Emperor of the French to support his puppet.

Before the end of 1865 practically everybody in the nited States agreed that French intervention must on end, and a despatch of December 16th announced:

"It has been the President's purpose that France should respectfully informed upon two points, namely:
First. That the United States earnestly desire to conue to cultivate sincere friendship with France.
Second. That this policy would be brought into imminent pardy unless France could deem it consistent with her erest and honor to desist from the prosecution of armed ervention in Mexico, to overthrow the domestic republi- government existing there, and to establish upon its ns the foreign monarchy which has been attempted to inaugurated in the capital of the country."[4]

is was as plain as if he had written: *Withdraw or*

[1] 3 *Dip. Cor.*, 1865, 412–414.
[2] 3 *Dip. Cor.*, 1865, 422.
[3] 3 *Dip. Cor.*, 1865, 427.
[4] 3 *Dip. Cor.*, 1865, 490.

fight; yet it was not said in a way to precipitate a c
flict.

There was great excitement in France early in 1
owing to the Mexican question. Some likened
commotion to that that preceded the revolution of 17
Drouyn de Lhuys reviewed with circumspection
course that France had pursued; and, as a condition
the withdrawal of French troops, he once more tried
get the United States to recognize Maximilian.[2]
February 12th Seward replied, with great care, mak
what Bigelow privately described as a very happy co
bination of the *suaviter in modo* with the *fortiter in*
he held his ground firmly but diplomatically.[3]

After considering the matter for several weeks, N
poleon concluded that he could not afford to risk a w
with the United States. On April 5, 1866, *Le Monite*
his official organ, announced that the French troo
would evacuate Mexico in three detachments—name
in November, 1866, and in March and November, 186
Thus the question of French intervention in Mex
seemed to be settled.

When the time came for the departure of the fi
third of the French army, Seward was informed by
American Minister in Paris that Napoleon had decid
to postpone the withdrawal of all his troops until

[1] 3 *Dip. Cor.*, 1865, 807. [2] 3 *Dip. Cor.*, 1865, 805 f

[3] 3 *Dip. Cor.*, 1865, 813 ff. In a private letter of February 14, 1
about this despatch, Seward said:

"What I write is approved by the President. The Congres
the United States is sufficiently imbued with a conviction of the
cessity of governmental action on the subject of the French inter
tion.

"What has recently been written by me on that subject to
Drouyn de Lhuys is marked by a degree of decision which Cong
will approve, while I trust it is expressed in a manner that ough
be deemed conciliatory and respectful. I shall look with m
solicitude to the reply which may now be expected from Fran
—Bigelow MSS. [4] 3 *Dip. Cor.*, 1865, 82

spring of 1867.[1] Seward replied by cable, under date of November 23, 1866:

"We cannot acquiesce—

"First. Because the term 'next spring,' as appointed for the entire evacuation, is indefinite and vague.

"Second. Because we have no authority for stating to Congress and to the American people that we have now a better guarantee for the withdrawal of the whole expeditionary force in the spring than we have heretofore had for a withdrawal of a part in November."

And third, in substance, because such delay would seriously conflict with the plans of the United States.[2]

Napoleon intended to withdraw his troops, but he wished to postpone their departure as long as possible, in the interest of French securities and to ward off the disgrace of his own unscrupulous scheme to use Maximilian and the Mexicans. In the hope of gaining time, at least, he proposed that a Mexican provisional government be formed to the exclusion of both Maximilian and Juarez. But Seward had repeatedly declined to sever the friendly relations of the United States with Juarez's government, although it had long been a fugitive. During the early part of 1866 Sheridan had supplied the Mexican Liberals with as many as thirty thousand muskets, and Juarez had won back most of the northeastern part of Mexico.[3] Seward now knew that he could safely refuse to carry on further negotiations for delay; and the avoidance of war he wisely thought more important than a display of enthusiasm and power. So, on January 18, 1867, he positively declined Napoleon's proposition.[4] Napoleon then gave up hope. In February, 1867, the French evacuated the City of Mexico, and intervention quickly came to an end.

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1866, 364.
[2] *Ibid.*, 366, 367.
[3] 2 Sheridan's *Memoirs*, 224.
[4] 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1867, 218.

In a few weeks Maximilian's forces were routed. T
Emperor and two of the most prominent of his Mexic
supporters were soon tried by court-martial, and on Ju
19, 1867, they were shot. Seward endeavored to obt
clemency for Maximilian, but the passions of the ar
seem to have prevented Juarez from commuting the s
tence.[1]

Meantime, in March, 1866, Seward learned that A
tria was about to permit four thousand volunteers to
enlisted for the army of Maximilian. John Lothr
Motley, United States Minister at Vienna, was the
upon requested to make known to Austria that su
permission would be viewed with displeasure by t
government of the United States.[2] On April 6th, af
having received fuller information, Seward instruc
Motley that

"in the event of hostilities being carried on hereafter
Mexico by Austrian subjects, under the command or w
the sanction of the government of Vienna, the United Sta
will feel themselves at liberty to regard those hostilities
constituting a state of war by Austria against the Repu
of Mexico; and in regard to such war . . . the Uni
States could not engage to remain as silent or neutral sp
tators."[3]

On the 16th, and after it was understood that o
about two thousand were to be sent, he notified Mot
that "the despatch of any troops from Austria
Mexico" "while the subject remains under conside
tion" would be regarded "as a matter of serious c
cern" by this government.[4] When, a few days la
Motley showed that he misapprehended Seward's p
tion, or halted in view of the contrast between the
ferent instructions, Seward informed him that that

[1] 2 *Dip. Cor.*, 1867, 411–20.
[2] 3 *Dip. Cor.*, 1865, 831, 83
[3] 3 *Dip. Cor.*, 1865, 833.
[4] 3 *Dip. Cor.*, 1865, 837.

question not to be discussed, and that if the Austrian overnment should persist in its course, he would be xpected to retire from Vienna.[1] On May 20, 1866, but vo months after Seward first took up the problem of ustria's giving aid to intervention in Mexico, Motley as informed by the Austrian government that, "in onsideration of all the . . . circumstances, the necessary easures have been taken to prevent the departure of ie volunteers lately enlisted for Mexico."[2] Here was mmary diplomacy; and the circumstances fully warnted it.

One of the striking facts connected with the neotiations about intervention in Mexico is that the onroe doctrine, though constantly appealed to at the me by the sensational newspapers and the politicians, ems not once to have been mentioned in any official spatch from the United States government. France olated the doctrine continuously for five years. But ward knew that it was no part of international law; at it had no authority of its own, and no claim even consideration except where it was used as a general rm to express a protest against European interfernce that endangered substantial and vital interests the United States. Foreign nations would yield to only in proportion as it was rational and as they ared the military strength ready to support it. Sewd was not as wise as we think if he did not see at all the reason of the Monroe doctrine would be ually strong and even more impressive if stated *hoc* in his own words, and without reference to e very different circumstances of the previous halfntury.

This much is certain: to Seward belongs the chief

[1] 3 *Dip. Cor.*, 1865, 838.

[2] *Ibid.*, 845.

credit for expelling those who were violating the M
roe doctrine, for restoring republicanism in Mexico, a
for averting a war with France that might have b
no less terrible than the Civil War, and might even h
led to a renewal of that terrible conflict.

CHAPTER XLI

SEWARD'S PART IN RECONSTRUCTION, 1865–69

It is hardly conceivable that any leader except Lincoln ould have conquered the difficulties of the period of econstruction. And it is possible that all the prestige nd confidence he had earned by his tact, philanthropy, nd perseverance might not have enabled him to direct system of thorough reconciliation. The relations be- ween those that had been enemies in battle, and even etween the ex-master and the ex-slave, were to be less ifficult to adjust than the antagonisms between radicals nd conservatives, between scheming, unscrupulous pol- icians and sullen, brutal men that lived to obstruct rogress and satisfy old prejudices. Lincoln consistent- maintained that no state had withdrawn from the nion, although most of the inhabitants in some of the ates were in organized insurrection against the Federal overnment.[1] The state governments of Louisiana and rkansas had been reorganized under the President's uthorization that the work might begin as soon as one- nth of the number of their voting population in 1860 ecame loyal; but Congress had withheld its approval y failing to admit delegations from those states. At e Hampton Roads conference Lincoln expressed the inion that as soon as the rebellion ceased the states ght to be allowed to exercise their normal powers,[2]

[1] Dunning's *Essays on the Civil War and Reconstruction*, 65 ff.
[2] 10 Nicolay and Hay, 122, 123.

and he promised to act with great liberality toward t Confederates. A few days after the surrender at A pomattox the administration decided that reconstructi should begin by the extension of the functions of t different departments to the states lately in revolt. Li coln expected that the citizens of the respective stat would soon conduct the state governments, althou they might at first do it badly.[1]

Seward's wishes were not less generous. Sev months before the end of the war he said that he look for propositions for a restoration of the Union to co from citizens and states not under Confederate contr and he added:

"All the world knows that so far as I am concerned, an I believe, so far as the President is concerned, all su applications will receive just such an answer as it comes a great, magnanimous, and humane people to gra to brethren who have come back from their wanderings seek a shelter in the common ark of our national securi and happiness."[2]

In his opinion slavery was "the only element of d cord among the American people," and that being on removed, he was sure it would not be the fault of t administration if a period of peace and harmony d not prevail.[3] Some remarks at Hampton Roads show that he expected the South would be treated with ki ness, and he objected to the inference that the Unit States demanded unconditional submission.[4]

[1] 3 Seward, 275, 283. [2] 5 *Works*, 504

[3] Speech at Auburn, November 7, 1864, 5 *Works*, 514.

[4] Campbell's MS. account of the conference says that in summing the conclusions Hunter had inferred that there was nothing left the Confederate States but unconditional submission. "Mr. Sew remarked that they [the President and himself] had not used word submission or any word that implied humiliation to the Sta and begged that it should not be noted."

But it fell to Andrew Johnson to say the decisive word as to reconstruction. Johnson was a crude and sinewy specimen of a self-made man. Born a "poor white," he owed much of his advancement in politics to the favor with which the common people regarded his inherited prejudices against the highest class in the South. He felt, as another Southerner said, that the Confederate leaders had inaugurated "a rich man's war but a poor man's fight." He remained in the United States Senate after his state passed an ordinance of secession; and subsequently, as military governor of Tennessee, he reorganized a loyal state government in harmony with Lincoln's aims. His valuable services as a southern unionist and a Democrat led to his nomination for the vice-presidency. The whole Republican party was committed to the theory that the states were still in the Union; for, otherwise, how could they have favored Johnson, whose state was officially a part of the Confederacy? His courage and pugnacity were well known; but it was not yet fully realized that he was wholly lacking in the qualities that made Lincoln great. Johnson's intentions were good, but it was his acts that were to be influential. It was very unfortunate, even if accidental, that his inauguration as Vice-President was marked by inebriation and a meandering, egotistical harangue. Within a few days after he became President his public remarks showed that thoughts of his rise from a humble origin and of the necessity of punishing traitors were uppermost in his mind. The North blushed for his dull egotism and the South feared that he might be very revengeful.

Long before the iron frame was removed or the splints and bandages could be taken off, Seward was eager to return to his work. Nearly a month elasped before he was able to attend a Cabinet-meeting, even when it took place in his own house; and then "his immovable arm

and stiffened jaw rendered him almost incapable of ta
ing part in the examination of papers or the discussion
questions."[1] He seems to have had no thought of retiri
from the Department of State. The diplomatist's wo
is likely to be hardest before and after war. Seward
undertakings were necessarily far from complete. T
two most important questions of long standing—Fren
intervention in Mexico and Great Britain's alleged v
lations of neutrality—were still unsettled, and they we
only a small part of the difficulties and projects in fo
eign relations that he was anxious to bring to a su
cessful conclusion.[2] He rightly believed, also, that h
services were never more needed in the departmen
As a matter of course, he dreaded to think of the tir
when he should have no responsibility and but little i
fluence in politics.

The opinions Johnson had expressed about treas
and negro suffrage[3] caused many persons to expect th
his policy would differ radically from that of his prec
cessor. But a presidential order of May 9th—the d
the Cabinet met at Seward's house—designed to re-
tablish the authority of the United States in Virgin
applied the policy that Lincoln's administration h
lately decided on.[4] Likewise the amnesty proclamati
of May 29, 1865, closely followed Lincoln's of earli
date. It was almost a matter of course, owing
changing circumstances, that the oath prescribed
Johnson should make the recognition of emancipati
more positive, and that the exceptions from this gene
pardon should be more numerous. Each proclamati
excluded all persons that had violated their oaths of al

[1] 3 Seward, 281, 282.
[2] 4 Pierce, 253, 254, quotes Seward's remarks to Sumner.
[3] 4 Pierce, 242, 243, 245.
[4] McPherson's *Reconstruction*, 8; McCulloch's *Men and Measures*
Half a Century, 378.

lance to the United States or had been conspicuous in
ie civil, the military, or the diplomatic service of the
onfederacy. One feature peculiar to Johnson's policy
as to preclude from amnesty all voluntary participants
the rebellion who possessed property estimated at the
xable value of over twenty thousand dollars.[1] Even
e men in the excepted classes were promised that, on
ecial application, clemency would be "liberally ex-
nded" to them as far as might be "consistent with
e facts of the case and the peace and dignity of the
nited States." On the same day the President ap-
inted a provisional governor for North Carolina and
thorized him to arrange for a convention of loyal
izens chosen by persons that had been rehabilitated
d were voters according to the constitution and laws
force in the state just previous to the passage of the
dinance of secession. The questions of suffrage and
eligibility to hold office were to be left to the con-
ntion or to the legislature, for the proclamation de-

[1] 2 Blaine's *Twenty Years of Congress*, 66 ff., 108, makes some very ertaining statements about Seward's influence in causing Johnson change his idea of reconstruction. The only fault to be found with m is that they are chiefly assumption and imagination and tend to ceal the facts. No one has ever produced evidence showing that nson needed to be convinced that the work of reconstruction ld be best directed by the executive department of the government. d before Seward was able to talk without great pain Johnson had un to follow the course Lincoln had laid out for himself. So the sident must either have changed his plans after merely a few rds with Seward or have surrendered in advance, having heard of at Blaine called Seward's "faculty, in personal intercourse with man or with a small number of men, of enforcing his own views taking captive his hearers." Assuming that Johnson felt this gic in the beginning, one is left to wonder why that same magic unable to prevent him from showing his prejudice against the lthy class (2 Blaine, 74), or from making so sorry an exhibition himself before the public, or from letting southern men "fasten ir hold upon Mr. Johnson even to the exclusion of Mr. Seward." Blaine, 109.)

clared that that was a power the people of the sev states had rightfully exercised from the foundatio the government. Before the middle of July all other unorganized states were treated in the same w Johnson was advancing by long strides, but his co was essentially the same as the one Lincoln had in p pect.[1]

The amnesty proclamation directed that the Secret of State should have general supervision of the syst of political pardons. Many men in the excepted cla made oral applications either at the department o Seward's house. "They come to me," he wrote in gust, 1865, "as if I were more inclined to tender than others, because I have been calm and cool un political excitement."[2] Many years later, Will Henry Trescot described[3] how Seward, with mock verity of voice and facial expression, answered his quests for the return of confiscated lands by playf declaring that the ex-Confederate leaders must h ble themselves before obtaining forgiveness. Then Secretary entered into a pleasant conversation, and all he could to aid the applicant. R. M. T. Hunter a man toward whom one would not expect Seward show any friendship. After Hunter was released a prisoner of war, he visited Washington. Seward gree him as if they had been life-long friends, and invi him to dinner. The Virginian found under his pla pardon duly signed and sealed. It was typical of S ard's disposition to make friends of enemies, of his g fellowship, and of his easy-going ways about mat that he regarded as of secondary importance.

During the New York campaign in the autum 1865 Weed and Raymond decided that Seward— though he had not yet recovered from his woun

[1] Dunning, 79 ff. [2] 3 Seward, 29

[3] In conversation with the author.

ught to address the public in defence of the Presi-
ent's policy, which was not gaining in popularity at
ie North. So it was arranged that while he was on
visit to Auburn a company of friends and neighbors
ould call, and that in reply to some remarks from
local clergyman, Doctor Hawley, the Secretary of
tate should express his opinions on the political sit-
ation. The speeches to be delivered were dictated in
dvance to the same stenographer. The programme
as carried out, and Seward spoke from his own door-
ep.[1]

Of the method of reconstruction he said: "It is *the*
lan which abruptly, yet distinctly, offered itself to the
st administration . . . when the work of restoration
as to begin; . . . it is the only possible plan which
ien or ever afterward could be adopted. . . . In the
ean time, the executive and legislative authorities of
ongress can do no more than discharge their proper
nctions of protecting the recently insurgent states
om anarchy during the intervening period while the
an is being carried into execution."[2]

Many Republicans were beginning to doubt if the
ork of rehabilitation was not proceeding too rapidly to
e safe and sincere. Seward's reply was:

"Certainly you must accept this proposed reconciliation,
you must propose to delay and wait until you can pro-
ire a better one. . . . Are you sure that you can procure
better reconciliation after prolonged anarchy, without
nploying force? Who will advocate the employment of
rce merely to hinder and delay, through prolonged an-
chy, a reconciliation which is feasible and perfectly con-
stent with the Constitution? In what part of the Con-

[1] These statements are made on the authority of George R. Bishop.
r. Bishop went to Auburn at the request of Henry J. Raymond and
ted as Seward's stenographer for a few days.—Letter of March 10,
96, to the author.

[2] 5 *Works*, 519.

stitution is written the power to continue civil war agai
succumbing states, for ultimate political triumph? W
would this be but, in fact, to institute a new civil war,
ter one had ended with the complete attainment of the l
ful objects for which it was waged? . . . Congress and
President have a right to accept or even make war agai
any part of the people of the United States only un
their limited power to suppress sedition and insurr
tion, and for that purpose only. What then? Must
give up the hope of further elevation of classes in
several states without any new guarantees for individ
liberty and progress? By no means. Marching in t
path of progress and elevation of masses is what we h
been doing still more effectually in the prosecution of
war."[1]

He was also sure that the plan already inaugura
"must and would be adopted," although turbulent
factious persons in one section, or manifestations of
trust or defiance in the other, might cause delay. T
way to hasten the work was for the sections to trust e
other.[2]

At first thought one wonders how Seward could h
supposed that Johnson was capable of succeeding i
difficult an undertaking as reconstruction was even t
known to be. Seward judged Johnson according to
good work he had done during the four years previ
to 1865, whereas it is the bad work of the four ye
subsequent to 1865 that has given Johnson his pl
in history. However, Seward's estimate of the Pr
dent was higher than ought to have been made by
one that had been intimately associated with hi
Seward soon perceived that a storm was gather

[1] 5 *Works*, 521. [2] 5 *Works*, 52

[3] "Except those of you who have been maimed or bereaved,
any of you suffered more of wrong, insult, and violence at
hands of those leaders than he [the President] has? Can we
forget where he can forgive? Are you aware that his term
amnesty are far more rigorous than those which were offered
Abraham Lincoln? . . . And you ask: May not the President

The approach of Congress prognosticates trials of any sorts, from the ill-assortment of tempers and the absence of a spirit of conciliation, when conciliation is the interest and duty of all," he wrote, November 18, 1865. A week later he heard "the rumbling of confessional ambitions." "How to steer clear of the partisan and personal contentions of Congress" was his "chief responsibility." As Congress was assembling he wrote again: "Every wild thought and inconceivable jealousy is afloat. Interests of cupidity and ambition, mingled with passion and prejudice. The President is suspected of everything, and guilty of nothing."[1]

Meantime the work of reconstruction had advanced so rapidly that its friends supposed it was almost complete. The conventions in the different states had repealed the ordinances of secession, abolished slavery, and repudiated war debts. Loyal legislatures had come into existence, and Senators and Representatives from the states of the late Confederacy were in Washington ex-

prove unfaithful to us? For myself, I laid aside partisanship, if I had any, in 1861, when the salvation of the country demanded that sacrifice. . . . Andrew Johnson laid aside, I am sure, whatever of partisanship he had at the same time. That noble act did not allow — but, on the other hand, it forbade — collusion by the friends of the Union with opponents of the policies of the war and of reconciliation which the government has found it necessary to pursue. . . . Patriotism and loyalty equally, however, require that fidelity in this case should be mutual. Be ye faithful, therefore, on your part, and, although the security I offer is unnecessary and superfluous, yet I will guarantee fidelity on his part. . . . Perhaps you fear the integrity of the man. I confess, with a full sense of my accountability, that among all the public men whom I have met or with whom I have been associated or concerned, in this or any other country, no one has seemed to me to be more wholly free from personal caprice and selfish ambition than Andrew Johnson; none to be more purely and exclusively moved in public action by love of country and good-will to mankind."—5 *Works*, 523.

[1] 3 Seward, 301, 302.

pecting to see the doors of Congress open before the
On December 18th the Secretary of State issued a pr
lamation announcing that the XIII. Amendment h
become a part of the Constitution. Eight of the sta
lately in rebellion were among those that ratified
Florida and Texas were unorganized, but it was
pected that they would not long remain so. Rec
struction would then be complete, if Congress sho
admit all the delegations from the South.

Unfortunately the evidences of success were me
ly superficial. Beneath the surface nearly everyth
had progressed unsatisfactorily to the Republicans
the Capitol. The conventions had not referred th
actions to the people for approval, as many Northern
thought should have been done. Since there were
longer any slaves, the number of members in the Ho
of Representatives must be proportionate to the f
population. But the suffrage had nowhere been exte
ed to the freedmen. Therefore, the white voters in
South would have a much larger representation than
same number in the North. Then it was sarcastica
asked: Do unionism and success owe this advantage a
an immediate voice in legislation to treason and defe
Several of the reconstructed legislatures soon enac
special laws to regulate the actions and status of
negroes. An extensive system of peonage, likely
affect a large portion of the ex-slaves, would have b
the result if these so-called "black codes" had b
tolerated. Although emancipation was not the purp
of the war, it had come as one of the results; and m
of the Republican leaders considered that their pa
was nominally bound to give the negroes the same c
rights as white persons, while some of the radicals w
already insisting on an equality of political rights.

[1] Dunning, 82.

rge a majority in Congress had become thoroughly issatisfied that, about the middle of December, 1865, a oint committee was appointed to inquire into the whole uestion of reconstruction.

Early in 1866 the President vetoed a bill to continue nd enlarge the functions of the Freedmen's Bureau, hich was designed especially to aid and protect ex-aves. The veto message needlessly expressed the pinion that most of the states lately in rebellion were entitled to enjoy their constitutional rights as mem-ers of the Union."[1] The Republicans were unable to ass the bill over the veto, but in a concurrent resolution ney informed the President and the country that no enator or Representative should be admitted from any ate held to have been insurrectionary, until Congress hould declare such state entitled to representation. In public speech, on February 22, 1866, Johnson charged hat there was an attempt on the part of Congress to onsolidate the Republic and that that was as objec-onable as its dissolution. He denounced Charles Sum-er and Thaddeus Stevens personally, and spoke as if s own assassination had been suggested by his oppo-ents. His words and acts excited the South with the ain belief that Congress must yield because it had no ght to tax the states to which it refused a voice legislation. Had his aim been to appear unwise and ndignified, the speech would have been a perfect suc-ss.

On the same day Seward addressed a political meet-g in New York city on the "Restoration of Union."[2] was announced that many of his prominent political iends — such as Thurlow Weed, William M. Evarts, amilton Fish, E. D. Morgan, R. M. Blatchford, and oses H. Grinnell—were in sympathy with him. This

[1] McPherson's *Reconstruction*, 72. [2] 5 *Works*, 529–40.

indicated that a serious effort was to be made to bu
up a new party or faction to support the adminis
tion. Unlike Johnson, Seward knew that personali
are always unprofitable. He now — as in Decemb
1860 — declared that there was nothing very seri
about the political situation. The Union had b
saved. According to his metaphor, the ship had pas
from tempest and billows to within the verge of a s
harbor, and had yet to pass merely some small reefs; a
the dispute was only a difference of opinion betw
pilots. He was confident that "there never was a
never can be any successful process for the restoration
the Union and harmony among the states, except
one with which the President has avowed himself sa
fied." "Say what you will or what you may, the sta
are already organized, in perfect harmony with
amended national Constitution, and are in earnest
operation with the Federal government. It would
quire an imperial will, an imperial person, and impe
powers greater than the Emperor of France posses
to reduce any one of these states with the consent
all the other states, to what you term a territorial c
dition." Therefore, he pronounced the concurrent re
lution to be "not a plan for reconstruction, but a p
for indefinite postponement and delay." He though
impracticable, vicious, and sure to fail. With confid
optimism he saw nothing alarming about the co
tion of the freedmen. In ninety years there had bee
change from slavery everywhere to freedom everywh
Because the country was wiser than it was ninety ye
earlier, he had no fear that it would "lack the wisd
or the virtue to go right on and continue the work
melioration and progress, and perfect in due time the
liverance of labor from restrictions, and the annihilat
of caste and class." So, in regard to the veto of
Freedmen's Bureau bill, he asked if the President ou

o be denounced "for refusing, in the absence of any necessity, to occupy or retain, and to exercise powers greater than those which are exercised by any imperial magistrate in the world."

In March, 1866, the Civil Rights bill was sent to the President. It was designed to establish absolute equality of civil rights among all citizens of the United States.[1] The President returned the bill with a veto so strong and lucid that there was a suspicion that it had not come from the pen of the man whose speeches were generally meandering and dull in expression. But Congress was no more open to conviction than the President; it promptly passed the bill over the veto.

As yet relatively few Republicans were in favor of demanding full negro suffrage.[2] They proposed the XIV. Amendment for the purpose of equalizing representa-

[1] Dunning, 91 ff., discusses the bill in a clear and scholarly manner.

[2] In April, 1866, Professor Charles Eliot Norton and E. L. Godkin had a long interview with Seward. A careful report—written out immediately after the conversation—quotes Seward as saying:

"There ought to be no question about the readmission of the South. Those states are loyal, devoted, earnest, patriotic, humiliated, and repentant, eager to come back. Congress has no right to refuse them. It shows its distrust of the Constitution by its refusal. Every necessary preliminary has been complied with; the South has accepted every needful condition; there is nothing more to ask of it. It has as good a right to be represented in Congress as the North has, but Congress chooses to keep it out of the Union."

. . . . . .

"The North has nothing to do with the negroes. I have no more concern for them than I have for the Hottentots. They are God's poor; they always have been and always will be so everywhere. They are not of our race. They will find their place. They must take their level. The laws of political economy will determine their position and the relations of the two races. Congress cannot contravene those. I am ready to leave the interests of the most intelligent white man to the guardianship of his state, and where I leave the interests of the white I am willing to trust the civil rights of the black. The South must take care of its own negroes as the North will and does. I was born a slave-holder; my state took away my

tion in the House, to prevent ex-Confederate lead
from assuming control of political affairs in the So
so as to interfere with congressional reconstruction,
guarantee the Federal debt incurred in the war, and
repudiate all Confederate obligations on the part of sta
or the nation. The Republicans were determined to ma
the acceptance of this amendment a precedent cor
tion of admitting Senators and Representatives from t
states of the late Confederacy.

On May 22, 1866, Seward spoke in Auburn on "T

slaves, and it did right, but I had to support them, and, indeed, h
to support some of them up to this time.

"The North must get over this notion of interference with
affairs of the South. Some people talk about being afraid of
South if the southern members of Congress are allowed to take t
seats. But what harm can they do? I am not afraid of them; I ne
was afraid of the South in my life, not even when it had power
wealth and united interests and patronage." . . .

. . . "I cannot imagine a base motive in politics any more t
some men a base motive in domestic life. The states form one fam
The South comes knocking at the door of the old home, and want
be taken in, and will not the father hasten to open the door and
come his repentant child?"

. . . . . .

. . . "The South longs to come home now, sir. Those who ref
to take them into the family again are in my opinion guilty of a gr
crime. It may be a sublimated consideration, but I confess it
great weight with me, that if I could not forgive the enemies of
country as I forgive my own enemies, I could not have the hope t
I might enter kingdom come. There is a want of charity in this
fusal to forgive which is worse than the sins against which it is m
fested. At this time the North is showing the most evil disposit
and I would rather go South, where they are behaving well, tha
Massachusetts, where they are behaving ill, and showing so bad
unforgiving a temper.

"But all this trouble is going to pass over. Things will come
all right. The people will not consent to follow the lead of Congr
for they love the Union, and mean to have it whole again."

. . . "I have every confidence. I never held an opinion that
popular, and I have never failed to see the country come up to
opinions in time. This doctrine is not Massachusetts doctrine, bu

uestion of Reconciliation."[1] He argued that what the ountry needed was not reconstruction, but reconcilia-on, which would come as soon as the acting members f Congress admitted from the ex-Confederate states ie members-elect that were loyal and qualified. The her leading contention was, that it could not be true, charged, that the President was unfaithful to the party id its cardinal principles of public policy; for his dis-greements with Congress on the Freedmen's Bureau ll, the Civil Rights bill, and one or two other subjects ere "purely extraneous incidents, and have no neces-ry or real bearing upon the question of reconciliation." e maintained that the President had "neither sought, or made, nor accepted any occasion for disagreeing om Congress, and that, so far as the purely incidental gislation to which I have referred is concerned, he is loyal to the principles of the Union party and to the tional cause as Congress or any of the members can aim to be." The speech was excellent in temper, but ght and unconvincing in argument. It lacked the vi-ity and enthusiasm of his senatorial days. In a single ntence he tried to answer the demand of the North at the negro should be given equal rights: "There is soundness at all in our political system, if the per-nal or civil rights of each member of the state, white black, free born or emancipated, native born or nat-alized, are not more secure under the administration [a] state government, than they could be under the ministration of the national government." Such ntiments called out the severe criticism of men that d once regarded him as a champion of liberty and uality, who was to use Plymouth rock as "the ful-

going to be the Massachusetts doctrine before long."—Published in New York *Evening Post*, March 24, 1888.

The speech was not printed in his *Works*, but was published in phlet form.

crum by whose aid I may move the world—the mo
world."[1]

After June, 1866, there was no hope of reconciliat
between Congress and the President. Johnson was
of harmony with the Republican party, and his suppo
ers must expect to find themselves allied with De
crats. It was not a pleasing prospect for a Republi
Cabinet. William Dennison, the Postmaster-Gene
James Speed, the Attorney-General, and James Harl
the Secretary of the Interior, withdrew in July.

Seward stood firmly and confidently by the policy t
he had done much to shape. This was to be expec
in view of all the circumstances. From the winter
1860–61 he had almost continually counted on see
the secessionists return speedily and in full repentan
He always cherished the amiable vanity of count
himself the most magnanimous of men; it was a part
his philosophy of practical politics, for the politician
concerned with the present and the future, not the p
Had he been ten years younger and in good physi
condition, he would undoubtedly have been as energe
in the reconstruction movement as he had been in reg
to military or diplomatic questions. But most of his
party friends were in sympathy with Congress; his p
sonal misfortunes were many; he was crippled a
scarred, and his vigor and ambition were not what th
had been; and it was evident that his political car
must end with his service in the Department of St
He was usually very charitable, and acted as if he
adopted for himself these immortal phrases of Linco
second inaugural address: "With malice toward no

[1] The New York *Independent* of May 31, 1866, heaped ridicule u
him, and said: "Mr. Seward once earned honor by remembering
negro at a time when others forgot him; he now earns dishono
forgetting the negro when the nation demands that the negro sh
be remembered."

vith charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God ives us to see the right, let us strive to finish the work ve are in; to bind up the nation's wounds." He showed o rancor, even in the forced contest with Congress, although he considered it "agitated and stormy," and its ebates "troubled, and its entire action convulsive."[1]

In July, Tennessee, after ratifying the proposed XIV. Amendment, obtained admission to Congress for her elegation. Seward promptly assumed the rôle of the orgiving father and prepared a feast, which he described s follows:

"'We had all the Tennesseean Representatives last night o dinner; and they seemed to appreciate the attention. I ad a calf served up in many ways, and they accepted it as returned prodigals.' The feast went off to the strains of artial airs from the band; and the two green-backed birds rom the sunny South, added, by clamorous loquacity, to ne hilarity of the occasion."[2]

The Republican majority in Congress was so large nat there was no hope for the President's policy unless strong conservative movement could be organized. he support of the Democrats could be counted on, ecause they would be benefited by it. The convention nat met in Philadelphia in the middle of August was ne result of an attempt to unite, for the purpose of an arly restoration of the Union, about the same class of en to whom Seward and Weed had appealed in the inter of 1860–61 to prevent the dissolution of the nion. Henry J. Raymond, who wrote the address, first eard of the convention from Weed. Seward, Weed, nd Raymond were at least its strongest supporters. he intention was not to found a new party to put the emocrats in power, but merely to develop sentiment in vor of admitting the ten states without further con-

[1] 3 Seward, 331.

[2] 3 Seward, 332.

ditions; that is, to settle the difficulties between the s
tions as soon as possible. There was something nob
in the faith, hope, and charity of the conception; but
utter lack of practical statesmanship was pitiable. T
attempt to make a picturesque illustration of fraterni
and forgiveness, by having delegates from Massach
setts and South Carolina enter the "Wigwam" arm
arm, was easily ridiculed. The North was not ready
trust the South; and it is strange that Seward a
Weed did not know it, especially as the best interests
the country were opposed to such hasty forgiveness.

Near the end of August the President began the
fated campaign of stump-speaking that has gone in
history as his famous "swinging-around-the-circle" tr
which Lowell humorously described as an "advertisi
tour of a policy in want of a party."[1] Seward had
advance some misgivings about the "excitements a
fatigues" that it was likely to create. "But it is a du
to the President and to the country, though so ma
think it otherwise, and I shall go on with right go
heart," he wrote.[2] The sight of a party consisting
the President of the United States, General Grant, A
miral Farragut, Seward, and others, ought to have i
pressed the multitudes that gathered in public plac
In Philadelphia, New York city, and elsewhere in t
East the crowds were not especially disrespectful, but
some of the western cities the President was rail
at as if he were a mere brawling street-orator.
Cleveland he answered the hooting rabble in the ma
ner of a man both mad and drunk, and he said, as
had often shown, that he cared nothing for digni
This was a public disgrace. His ablest champion, t
New York *Times*,[3] criticised him for it, and reproved h

[1] *Political Essays*, 296.

[2] 3 Seward, 339

[3] September 7, 1866.

or assuming that his opponents were enemies of the Union."

The rôle of the Secretary of State in this episode was pathetic. One of the wits of the time spoke of Seward's "new office of bear-leader."[1] Unfortunately he was very unsuccessful even in this task, for he could do little more than apologize for Johnson, and in a few commonplace sentences call upon the audiences to support the President in opposition to Congress. In New York he said: "I know you will give a certificate at the polls that the Union of the United States consists not of twenty-five States but of thirty-six."[2] At Niagara he told the crowd that Lincoln had been traduced when alive, but after his assassination all hearts inclined to the deepest sorrow; and it would be the same if Johnson should be taken off.[3] To the citizens of Buffalo he stated the issue as follows:

"The question is between the President and the Congress. Of all that has been done, tell me what the Congressmen of the United States have done? Of all that has been done to bring us so near the consummation [of reconstruction], you see that nothing has been done that was not done through the direction, agency, activity, perseverance, and patriotism of Andrew Johnson, President of the United States. Will you stand by Congress? or will you stand by the President?"[4]

At the unveiling of the Douglas monument in Chicago, he told his hearers that it was one of the proudest political recollections of his life that, although he and Douglas had been what the world called enemies for all but six months of their acquaintance, Douglas's widow and children and friends had invited him to be the orator on this occasion.

[1] Lowell's *Political Essays*, 290.
[2] New York *Times*, August 30, 1866.
[3] *Times*, September 2, 1866. [4] *Times*, September 4, 1866.

"It proved this, namely: That Stephen A. Douglas w a great and generous man. Had he not been he could n have gone through ten years of opposition to me with leaving in my heart a pang or wound. It proved tha knew all the while that he was a patriot, and that he thou me to be one also. . . . I think that Stephen A. Douglas w Abraham Lincoln will live in the memory and homage mankind with the Washingtons and Hamiltons of the R olutionary age."[1]

Until the summer of 1866 many of Seward's old frie believed that he had remained in Johnson's Cabi mainly for the purpose of restraining the President; after the absurd trip to the West—to eulogize Doug and to exhibit Johnson—he became the object of most cutting reproaches. The whole controversy ab reconstruction had become an intensely bitter one tween Johnson and the Republican leaders. Not a f of Seward's most ardent champions in earlier years dep ciated both his acts and his character, and recalled tain doubtful incidents in his career to prove that impulses and aims were now personal and resentful. spoke of "the decline of his abilities and that dry- of the mind's nobler temper." "People are disgust Seward seems to have lost his wits as well as his pr ciples," wrote another. Still another concluded an a cle thus: "Distrusted by his old friends, he will ne be taken to the bosom of his old enemies. His trou is not that the party to which he once belonged is wi out a leader, but that he wanders about, like a ghost leader without a party."[2] These were the severe ju ments of opponents. Seward had not lost his pri ples, nor radically changed his opinions; but he w indeed, the victim of strange circumstances: to adh to the patriotic duty as well as ambition to keep con

[1] *Times*, September 7, 1866.

[2] 3 *Nation*, 234. Lowell's *Political Essays*, 292 ff., and 4 Pi 299, 308, give further illustrations of harsh criticism.

international difficulties, he had to stand at the Presi-
nt's right hand and to help defend a policy that was
own not less than the President's. Although this
fence was often so calm and impersonal as to lack
or and seem half-hearted, Seward was blamed for
hnson's follies and credited with much of the ability
t was displayed in the President's communications
Congress. Seward's worst enemies could not have
shed to see him humiliate himself as he did in the
winging-around-the-circle" trip. It was a sad fact
t Seward's popularity had gone and was never to
urn, to any considerable extent, while he remained
public life. The Quixotic expedition to the West was
much for Seward's frail condition; he became dan-
ously ill in Kentucky, and returned to Washington
advance of the other members of the presidential
ty. Subsequently his activity in reconstruction was
ch less conspicuous.

The President's appeal to the country was a complete
co; for, as Nasby suggested, the people were too
l to see "the danger of concentrating power in the
ds of Congress instead of diffusing it through one
n." It resulted in increasing Johnson's unpopular-
; it encouraged the unorganized states to reject the
V. Amendment and to decline the terms offered by
ngress; it gave the Republican leaders a surer fol-
ing, and convinced them that more summary meth-
should be applied to reconstruction. But the Presi-
t was not discouraged. His annual message of 1866
rgued the question, and bill after bill, which in differ-
ways touched the principles involved in his policy,
met with a pugnacious veto, which the majorities in
ngress promptly rendered futile.

The reconstruction act of March 2, 1867, was a for-
expression of the determination of the Republicans
begin anew the work of reorganizing the ten states.

These states were divided into five military distri
the military officer in command in each district wa
provide for the holding of constitutional conventi
the members of which should be chosen by citizen
the state, regardless of color, who had attained the
of twenty-one years; but all classes of persons descri
in the proposed XIV. Amendment as conspicuous in
Confederate movement were to be disqualified from
ing or holding office, and the amendment itself mus
approved by the convention. These acts subordina
the existing state organizations to the military aut
ity; they soon tore down the ten structures built acc
ing to the President's plan; they gave the ballot to
men not political offenders; they inaugurated the bro
est democracy, where a very large majority of the po
lation was not only ignorant, but also without the m
standard that is the prerequisite of decent governm
To bring about a different result, it would have b
necessary for the President to be less precipitate
bigoted; for the South to be less prejudiced against
negro and to place less confidence in Johnson; and
the Republicans to be less ambitious to secure a l
lease of political power for themselves, while they g
the freedman the protection he needed.

Johnson's expectation of winning the support of m
Republicans had caused him to resist the demands of
Democrats for office. When Congress decided upo
new plan of reconstruction, it was feared that the P
dent might remove many civil officers, either as a me
of opposing Congress or of punishing men for not
porting him. To prevent this, Congress passed a
providing that civil officers appointed with the ad
and consent of the Senate, and not holding their p
tions during a period fixed by law, should not be
moved without the Senate's consent; that a like con
should be obtained for the removal of any membe

ne Cabinet during the term of the President by whom e was appointed; but that the President might sus- end any official, when Congress was not in session, ending action by the Senate. Any violation of this ct was pronounced "a high misdemeanor," punishable y fine and imprisonment. An amendment to the army ppropriation bill sought to deprive the President of the ommand of the army by providing that orders should sue through the general of the army, who should not e removed without the consent of the Senate. These ere direct and unwarrantable attacks upon the con- itutional prerogatives of the executive branch of the overnment.

The tenure-of-office bill was returned with another in- fectual veto, which argued the constitutional as well the practical political question with great force and earness. James G. Blaine believed that Seward's hand was evident in every paragraph."[1] Any one fa- iliar with Seward's speeches and writings will surely e that the temper, several of the ideas, and many of e phrases and words of this paper very distinctly sug- st the style peculiar to the Secretary of State. No holly conclusive evidence has been found to show that wrote either this or any other veto message; but the ct that William M. Evarts, Seward's intimate friend d Johnson's counsel in the impeachment trial, offered prove in that trial, but was not permitted to do so, at the preparation of this veto was given over to Sew- d and Stanton,[2] leaves very little room for doubt.

The impeachment of Johnson had been discussed al- ost continually since the autumn of 1866. Improba- ity of success had been the greatest obstacle to at- mpting it. One of the virtues that the tenure-of-office

[1] 2 Blaine's *Twenty Years of Congress*, 273.

[2] Evarts's language is quoted 2 Blaine, 369.

act was expected to possess was that any violation o would make impeachment easy. Stanton was the o Cabinet-officer that was entirely out of sympathy w Johnson's aims. In August, 1867, the President s pended him and appointed General Grant Secretary War *ad interim*. After Congress met and the Sen refused to approve the President's act, Stanton resum possession of his office. In February, 1868, he w again removed, and General Lorenzo Thomas was pointed Secretary *ad interim*. Thereupon preparati for impeachment proceedings were begun. After a t lasting more than three months Johnson was acquitt If one of the several Republican Senators that vo with the Democrats had cast a partisan vote, Benjan F. Wade would have succeeded Johnson. Seward look upon this attempt to get rid of the President as a me ure that was likely to endanger constitutional gove ment.[1] Within a few years the opinion became g eral that Johnson's acquittal was very fortunate.

When the presidential campaign of 1868 opened m of the ten states had recovered their former status the Union, and the Republican platform pronounced success of the congressional plan to be assured. "T guaranty by Congress of equal suffrage to all loyal m at the South was demanded by every consideration public safety, of gratitude, and of justice, and must maintained; while the question of suffrage in all the l al states properly belongs to the people of those state said the same authority. General Grant was cho as the party candidate for the presidency, and Schu Colfax, one of the leaders at the Capitol, was given second place on the ticket. On the other hand, Democratic platform called interference with suffr in the states "a flagrant usurpation of power," an

[1] 3 Seward, 376.

garded "the reconstruction acts (so-called) of Con-
ess, as such, as usurpations and unconstitutional, revo-
ionary, and void." While one platform charged John-
n with treachery, usurpations, and abuses, the other
d that he was "entitled to the gratitude of the whole
nerican people." The Democratic candidates were
oratio Seymour, who had not been an enthusiastic sup-
rter of the late war, and Frank P. Blair, a brave Fed-
l soldier, who had recently said in a letter that there
s "but one way to restore the government and the
nstitution," and that was for the President-elect to
clare the acts of reconstruction "null and void, com-
the army to undo its usurpations at the South, dis-
rse the carpet-bag state governments, allow the white
ople to reorganize their own governments, and elect
nators and Representatives."[1]

These circumstances were somewhat embarrassing for
ward, who approved Johnson's policy; but he had no
re sympathy with the revolutionary tendencies of the
mocrats than with the recent revolutionary acts of
Republicans. In a political speech to his friends
l neighbors in Auburn, on the eve of the election, he
plained his position in the present and in the past.
to reconstruction he said:

"I simply say that as I stood firmly by the wise and
gnanimous policy of President Lincoln in his life, so I
e adhered to the same policy since his mortal remains
e committed to an untimely grave, and I have adhered
h equal fidelity to his constitutional successor.
When the civil war came to an end, no wise man sup-
ed that the transition could be abruptly made from a
e of civil war to a condition of tranquillity and peace
nout occasional disturbance to be produced by incon-
rate individuals, and even by unlawful combinations
disappointed and excited men. . . . I have habitually
ught that all needful political wisdom in regard to that

[1] McPherson, 381.

crisis was contained in the Scriptural injunction, 'ag with your adversary quickly,' and that this injunct which is true in regard to all adversaries, is especi true when your adversaries are estranged brethren."[1]

He now preferred to support the Republicans, though they had committed some grievous mista "Nevertheless, the Republican party neither rests der any suspicion of its devotion to human freed nor can it fall under any such suspicion."[2] The De cratic party had "not so conducted itself in its co rate and responsible action as to secure the entire co dence of a loyal and exacting people in its unconditio and uncompromising adherence to the Union, or in acceptance and approval of the effective abolition slavery." He appreciated the patriotism and hero of many of the Democrats, but the party as a wh had not freed itself from the errors and shortcomi of its leaders during the war, and therefore it was yet prepared "to assume the responsibilities of a cued and regenerated nation."[3]

The overwhelming Republican victory, which g Grant two hundred and fourteen electoral votes against eighty for Seymour, put an end to all hop undoing what had been accomplished by the cong sional plan.

Considering that Seward had no special responsibi in regard to President Johnson's acts, he has been severely judged for his part in reconstruction. If coln had lived he and Seward would probably have veloped their plans gradually and tentatively. As in contest with the abolitionists about a proclamatio emancipation, it is likely that Lincoln would have fo a way to yield some of his preferences while he

[1] 5 *Works*, 550. [2] 5 *Works*, 553. [3] 5 *Works*, 553, 5

neral control. But Johnson's pugnacity, prejudices, d violent language alienated sober-minded men. Con-ary to what is frequently supposed, there was not so ose a mutual sympathy between Johnson and Seward there had been between Lincoln and Seward. They d common interests, and felt a common antipathy to ost of the aims of Sumner and Thaddeus Stevens; but hile Johnson despised these radical leaders, Seward ually got on pleasantly with them, and even enlisted em in the championship of one or more of his enter-ises. The presidential policy in its origin and first eps was largely due to Seward, but as prosecuted and arreled about, it was almost wholly Johnson's. At nes Seward's support was merely perfunctory. He ilosophized mildly, and continued loyal to his chief; t he did not study or try to master the conflicting rces as he had done in 1860–61. His conduct proved, he said in 1844, that he loved peace and harmony th his fellow-men. As will soon be seen, his ambi-on, strength, and best thoughts were devoted to sev-al questions in foreign relations.

CHAPTER XLII

ASPIRATIONS FOR TERRITORIAL EXPANSION: THE PURCH OF ALASKA; ATTEMPTS TO ANNEX ST. THOMAS, ST. JO SANTO DOMINGO, AND HAWAII

SEWARD was a very conspicuous prophet of ter rial expansion. His lively imagination and enthusia which were easily stirred by mere magnitude, his be in vast national enterprises, his fondness for optimi speculation, and his understanding of certain curr and traits of civilization in this hemisphere—all ten to lead him into predictions of the future influence extent of the United States. Public sentiment at North, as has been noticed, forbade him to favor acquisition that would relatively increase the polit power of the South. But he felt confident that United States were to exercise the paramount influe on this continent and in and beyond the Pacific, only by example, but also by actual governmental trol and incorporation.

In a political letter written in 1846, he said: " population is destined to roll its resistless waves to icy barriers of the North, and to encounter oriental ci zation on the shores of the Pacific."[1] During the del about the compromise of 1850, he spoke of "the st yet to come over ice-bound regions beyond the St. L rence and sun-burnt plains beneath the tropics."[2] eulogy of Henry Clay, in 1852, he expressed this opin

[1] 3 *Works*, 409.

[2] 1 *Works*, 109.

Expansion seems to be regulated, not by any difficul-
es of resistance, but by the moderation which results
om our own internal constitution. No one knows how
pidly that restraint may give way. . . . Even prudence
ill soon be required to decide whether distant regions,
st and west, shall come under our own protection, or
e left to aggrandize a rapidly spreading and hostile
omain of despotism."[1] At St. Paul, in 1860, he had
is vision:

"Standing here and looking far off into the northwest, I
e the Russian as he busily occupies himself in establish-
g seaports and towns and fortifications, on the verge of
is continent, as the outposts of St. Petersburg, and I can
y, 'Go on and build up your outposts all along the coast,
o even to the Arctic Ocean—they will yet become the
tposts of my own country—monuments of the civilization
the United States in the northwest.' So I look off on
rince Rupert's Land and Canada, and see there an in-
nious, enterprising, and ambitious people occupied with
idging rivers and constructing canals, railroads, and tele-
aphs to organize and preserve great British provinces
rth of the great lakes, the St. Lawrence, and around the
ores of Hudson bay, and I am able to say, 'It is very
ell; you are building excellent states to be hereafter ad-
itted into the American Union.' I can look southwest
d see amid all the convulsions that are breaking the
panish-American republics, and in their rapid decay and
ssolution, the preparatory stage for their reorganization
free, equal, and self-governing members of the United
ates of America."[2]

t the same time he remarked that in casting about "for
e future the ultimate central seat of power of the
orth American people," he had concluded, after look-
g at Quebec, New Orleans, Washington, San Francisco,
ncinnati, and St. Louis, that it "would yet be found in
e valley of Mexico; that the glories of the Aztec capi-
l would be renewed, and that city would become ulti-

[1] 3 *Works*, 109. [2] 4 *Works*, 333.

mately the capital of the United States of America
Persons not in sympathy with his prophecies had ma
tained that he was in favor of adding at least a part
China to the national domain. That this did him no
justice he himself made evident, in 1861, when he wr
to Cassius M. Clay: "Russia and the United States m
remain good friends until, each having made a circuit
half the globe in opposite directions, they shall meet a
greet each other in regions where civilization first
gan, and where, after so many ages, it has become n
lethargic and helpless."[2]

Probably to suit some temporary purpose, he a
prophesied that Canada would not be annexed. Af
he returned from Labrador, in 1857, he wrote a lett
which was printed in the *Evening Journal*, saying th
his previous opinion about the future of Canada w
dropped "as a national conceit."

"I find them jealous of the United States and of Gr
Britain, as they ought to be; and, therefore, when I l
at their resources and extent, I know that they will
neither conquered by the former nor permanently held
the latter. They will be independent as they are alre
self-maintaining. Having happily escaped the curse
slavery, they will never submit themselves to the domin
of slave-holders, which prevails in, and determines
character of, the United States." . . . "All southern pol
cal stars must set, though many times they rise again w
diminished splendor. But those which illumine the
remain forever shining, forever increasing in splendor."

On several occasions, both before and after this time,
expressed confidence that the United States were to
the only power on this continent. Naturally, therefo

[1] 4 *Works*, 331, 332. This was one of his favorite political dre
and he often spoke of it in private. In 1868 he thought it would
about in thirty years.—4 Pierce's *Sumner*, 328.

[2] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 293. For other opinions favorable to expans
etc., see *ante*, p. 151, and 4 *Works*, 311, 312, 399.

s counter-prophecy of 1857 was soon forgotten—for-
ten even by its author, until during the *Trent* excite-
nt it was brought to mind and used to refute the
rges that Seward had shown an aggressive spirit
inst Great Britain by advocating the annexation of
nada.[1]

In all Seward's dreams of territorial expansion was
expectation that they were to be realized by peace-
means, such as the quiet spread of population and
growth of commerce.[2] Although his opinion may
e been affected by political considerations in relation
the Mexican War, then impending, he wrote, in 1846:
want no war. I want no enlargement of territory,
ner than it would come if we were content with 'a
sterly inactivity.' I abhor war, as I detest slavery.
would not give one human life for all the continent
t remains to be *annexed*."[3] Nor would he hasten
annexation of Mexico. Fear of the increased influ-
e of slavery resulting from incorporating tropical
tes led him to study out strong objections. As the
abitants of Mexico could not govern themselves, he
ed if they were to be governed by pro-consular pow-
or by being admitted as equals. Pro-consuls must
ays be supported by armies, he said; and if the Mex-
n provinces became states of the Union, there was
erious question whether they would govern or be
erned.[4]

The "Thoughts" of April 1, 1861, seem not to have
n affected by any purpose to extend the boundaries

[1] Neither the long letter (reprinted in the Philadelphia *Press* of
uary 8, 1862) nor the despatch of the same date to Adams, quoting
explaining it, is published or referred to in Seward's *Works*, or the
omatic Correspondence, or Baker's, F. W. Seward's, or Lothrop's
raphy.

[2] See *ante*, p. 68.

[3] 3 *Works*, 409.

[4] 3 *Works*, 655. Somewhat similar expressions are used in the eu-
on John Quincy Adams, 3 *Works*, 75, 76.

of the United States. But if the vast war contempl
had destroyed monarchical influences on this contin
the United States would probably have been left at
head of a great confederation. That Seward was re
to give a practical expression to his aspirations for t
torial expansion is proved by his instructions of Jun
1861, to Corwin, saying that the United States w
purchase Lower California rather than let any par
it fall, either by purchase or conquest, into the hand
the Confederates. But as the Mexican government,
that of the United States, was barely able to sustai
self, there was no time to think about voluntarily
tracting boundary lines.

The purchase of Alaska has often been called Sewa
greatest service to his country. A vast territory w
Russia acquired by right of discovery and held for
siderably more than a century, was sold to the Un
States before hardly a dozen Americans knew that
a proposition was even under consideration. There
tradition that during Polk's administration someth
was said to Russia about parting with her possess
in North America. It is certain that as early as
Senator Gwin and the Assistant Secretary of State
cussed the question with Stoeckl, the Russian Min
at Washington, and that as much as five million do
was offered.[1] The official answer was that this sum
not regarded as adequate, but that Russia would
ready to carry on negotiations as soon as the Min
of Finance could look into the question. There wa
occasion for haste; Buchanan soon went out of of
and the subject, which was never known to many
sons, seems to have been entirely forgotten for se
years.

[1] Charles Sumner's speech on *The Cession of Russian America*

The interests of a few citizens on the Pacific slope
ere the main-spring of the little that had been done.
or more than a decade San Francisco had annually
ceived a large amount of ice from Russian America,[1]
id United States fishermen had been profitably en-
aged in different parts of the far northern Pacific.
hose interests had rapidly increased from year to year.
t the beginning of 1866 the legislature of Washing-
n territory sent a petition to President Johnson,
ying that an abundance of codfish, halibut, and sal-
on had been found along the shores of Russian
merica, and requesting him to obtain from the Rus-
an government such concessions as would enable
merican fishing vessels to visit the ports and harbors
that region for the purpose of obtaining fuel, water,
d provisions.[2] Sumner says that this was referred to
e Secretary of State, who suggested to Stoeckl that
me comprehensive arrangement should be made to
event any difficulties arising between the United States
d Russia on account of the fisheries. About this time
veral Californians wished to obtain a franchise to carry
the fur-trade in Russian America. Senator Cole, of
lifornia, urged both Seward and Stoeckl to support the
quest. Seward instructed Cassius M. Clay, the United
ates Minister at St. Petersburg, to consult the Russian
vernment on the subject. Clay reported in February,
67, that there was a prospect of success. In fact,
e time happened to be peculiarly opportune for nego-
tion.

Russian America had never been brought under the
gular rule of the imperial government. Since the be-
nning of the century its few thousand civilized inhab-
nts had been governed by a great monopoly called

[1] H. H. Bancroft's *Alaska*, 587.
[2] Memorial quoted by Sumner, 9.

the Russian-American Company. Its charter had
pired with the year 1861, and had not been renewe
yet a renewal was expected. This monopoly was
unprofitable that it had sought and obtained spec
privileges, such as the free importation of tea into R
sia. It had even sublet some of its privileges to
Hudson Bay Company. This sublease to Englishm
was to expire in June, 1867. By the usual means
communication Russian America was from Russia
of the most distant regions on earth. To organize
as a colony would involve great expense and cont
uous financial loss. To defend it in time of war w
Great Britain or the United States would be an
possibility. When the Crimean war broke out comm
interest led the Russian-American and the Hudson B
companies to induce their respective governments
neutralize the Russian and the British possessions
the northwest coast of America.[1] Otherwise Gr
Britain might easily have seized the Russian territo
To the imperial government at the beginning of 1
the problem resolved itself into these three questio
Shall the charter of the monopoly, with its privile
and unsatisfactory treatment of the inhabitants, be
newed? Shall an expensive colonial system be org
ized? Shall we sell at a fair price territory that
surely be lost, if it ever becomes populated and val
ble? It was foreseen that unless sold to the most c
stant and grateful of Russia's friends, it was likely
be taken by her strongest and most inveterate ene
Stoeckl was spending part of the winter of 1866–67
St. Petersburg, and the different questions were tall
over with him, for he had long been Minister to
United States. In February, 1867, as he was about
return to Washington, "the Archduke Constantine,

[1] Bancroft's *Alaska*, 570.

rother and chief adviser of the Emperor, handed him a
ıap with the lines in our treaty marked upon it, and
ɔld him he might treat for this cession."[1]

The following month Stoeckl and Seward began ne-
otiations. One named ten million dollars as a reason-
ble price; the other offered five millions. Then they
ook the middle ground — namely, seven million five
undred thousand — as a basis. Seward urged and
toeckl agreed that the half million should be dropped.
he Russian-American Company still claimed privileges
ıd held interests that could not be ignored. Seward
ıw the objections to assuming any responsibility for
ıatters of this kind; so he offered to add two hundred
ıousand dollars to the seven millions if Russia would
ive a title free from all liabilities. On the evening of
Iarch 29, 1867, the Russian Minister called at Seward's
ouse and informed him of the receipt of a cablegram
eporting the Emperor's consent to the proposition,
ıd then he added that he would be ready to take up
ıe final work the next day, for haste was desirable.
Vith a smile of satisfaction at the news, Seward pushed
ide the table where he had been enjoying his usual
ening game of whist, and said: "Why wait till to-
orrow, Mr. Stoeckl? Let us make the treaty to-night."
he needed clerks were summoned; the Assistant Sec-
tary went after Sumner, the chairman of the Senate
ɔmmittee on foreign affairs; the Russian Minister
nt for his assistants; and at midnight all met at the
epartment of State. By four o'clock in the morning
e task was completed. In a few hours the President
nt the treaty to the Senate. As only Sumner knew
what had taken place, it was supposed that the mes-
ge announced was a veto of some recent bill.[2]

[1] Sumner, 9.

[2] Most of the statements in this paragraph are based on 3 Seward,
7–49.

On questions of foreign policy Sumner had great i
fluence in the Senate at this time. He made a thorou
study of the resources of Alaska, and championed t
treaty with persistency and a very impressive array
facts; yet he was no enthusiast for expansion.[1] As t
proposition of cession came from Russia, and at a tin
when the United States were in financial difficulties
account of the expenditures of the Civil War, it w
made the object of much ridicule. Many persons a
sumed that the territory was a frozen region where the
was but little animal or vegetable life, and that its i
habitants, excepting a few Russians, were Esquimau
and its chief products polar-bears and glaciers. It w
often spoken of as Walrussia. The area of the cessi
is five hundred and seventy-seven thousand three hu
dred and ninety square miles. Even if valueless exce
for furs and fisheries, there could be no great loss
the price agreed on. As the population, aside from t
aborigines, numbered only about ten thousand,[2] and
no foreign complications were to be feared, there we
no grounds for weighty political objections. Howeve
there would have been no likelihood of ratifying t
treaty if only the supposed desirability of the ter
tory had been involved. The important fact was th
Russia wished to sell. Both the government and t
people of the United States still entertained feelings
gratitude toward her. She refused Napoleon's pro
sition of intervention in 1862, and about a year la

[1] "But there is one other point on which I file my *caveat*. T
treaty must not be a precedent for a system of indiscriminate
costly annexation. . . . But I cannot disguise my anxiety that ev
stage in our predestined future shall be by natural processes with
war, and I would add even without purchase. There is no territo
aggrandizement which is worth the price of blood. . . . Our triun
should be by growth and organic expansion in obedience to 'pre-es
lished harmony,' recognizing always the will of those who are to
come our fellow-citizens."—Sumner, 16.

[2] Sumner, 2

e sent her fleet to New York and Washington, where ere were great demonstrations of friendship between e two governments. It was widely believed—though ithout the slightest authority—that this fleet was to lp the United States in case of war with France or reat Britain. Only two Senators voted against the eaty. Ratifications were exchanged and the treaty as proclaimed June 20, 1867. Doubtless to make it actically impossible for the House to refuse to ap- opriate the money, commissioners were appointed by ch government within a few weeks, and the actual ansfer occurred October 11, 1867, accompanied by mili- ry salutes between the Russian and the United States oops. At this time the name Alaska — which Sew- d had chosen from the many that had been suggested came officially into use.[1] When the House took up e question of voting the appropriation, much ill-feel- g was expressed on account of the speed and secrecy th which the treaty had been negotiated. Jealousy the power of the Senate and hatred of the admin- ration were also influential. But the desire not to nibit any lack of appreciation of Russia's friendship evailed with many members, and the bill was passed a vote of one hundred and thirteen to forty-three.[2]

During the Civil War most of the inhabitants of the tish, the Spanish, and the French West Indies sym- hized with the Confederacy. Confederate cruisers ally received a welcome in those islands, and the al governors connived at almost everything that did convict them of a flagrant violation of neutrality. the other hand, Federal warships were treated with d formality, watched, and denied coal and repairs enever a plausible excuse could be found. In the

[1] Seward, 369.

[2] *Globe*, 1867–68, 4055.

Danish West Indies just the reverse was the case. T
governor of the island of St. Thomas was so frien
that United States men-of-war could openly or secre
obtain special favors.[1] However, Lincoln's adminis
tion continually felt the inconvenience of not hav
in the West Indies a ship-yard and a fortified har
where prizes could be passed on, so as to save long
expensive journeys.

Not only was Denmark the power most likely to c
sent to part with one or more of her West Indian p
sessions, but her island of St. Thomas was regarded
especially well suited to the purposes in view. It
about twelve miles long and three miles wide, and
that time contained a population of thirteen th
sand inhabitants, most of whom spoke English.[2] T

[1] James Parton, *The Danish Islands*, 6.

[2] Subsequently, Vice-Admiral David D. Porter gave this opin
"St. Thomas lies right in the track of all the vessels from Eur
Brazil, East Indies, and the Pacific Ocean bound to the West I
islands or to the United States. . . . It is a central point from w
any or all of the West India islands can be assailed, while it is im
vious to attack from landing parties, and can be fortified to any
tent. . . . St. Thomas is a small Gibraltar of itself, and could onl
attacked by a naval force."—Parton, 63. Ex-Assistant Secretar
the Navy Fox pronounced the harbor "one of the best in the W
Indies, admirable for naval purposes, and fully equal to all the req
ments of the commerce of those seas."—Parton, 71. The correct
of these opinions was disputed later.

Parton wrote a good account of the attempt to acquire tw
the Danish islands. He was employed by the Danish represent
at Washington, who supplied him with confidential documen
Pierce's *Sumner*, 619), and with memoranda of interviews with
ard at different times. His inferences and pleas are sometim
parte, but his statements and use of the records were commended
by opponents. The sketch by Miss Olive Risley Seward (2 *Scrib*
Magazine, new series, 585 ff.), the reply by Sumner's biograph
Pierce, 615 ff.), and the letters by "Dixon" (reprinted from the Bo
Advertiser of several dates in January, 1869), and by Robert J. Wa
(reprinted from the Washington *Chronicle* of January 28, 1868)
much less complete and valuable than Parton's pamphlet.

island of St. John, much less desirable, has about the same area, but a very small population. Santa Cruz, the other important island of that group, has a population and an area of about twice those of St. Thomas.

In January, 1865, Seward first suggested to the Danish Minister at Washington, General Raasloff, that the United States wished to purchase these islands. The proposition was not received with favor by the Danish government, mainly for the reason that the Prussian amputation of Schleswig-Holstein had weakened and humiliated the Danes so that they were eager to avoid any further appearance of a decline of national prestige. So the question was laid aside until near the end of 1865. Meantime a new Danish Ministry had come into power, and it concluded that a large sum of money might be more beneficial to the interests of the nation than the possession of the islands.

When this was reported to Seward he was about to leave in a United States man-of-war, the *De Soto*, for a month's cruise in the West Indies. The party consisted of the Secretary, the Assistant Secretary, Mrs. F. W. Seward, and her sister. Avowedly the purpose of the trip was to benefit the health of Seward and his son, neither of whom had recovered from the effects of the murderous assault in the previous April. Notwithstanding the question of health, and Seward's earnest desire not to let the public or foreign nations know of his communications with Denmark, it was widely believed that he was thinking of acquisitions in the tropics. Doubtless the use of a government ship for a family outing strengthened this belief. The *De Soto* made straight for the harbor of St. Thomas. Seward passed three busy days there, meeting everybody and seeing everything of interest. Then a short time was spent on the island of Santa Cruz. In returning the

travelers stopped at Santo Domingo city. Seward hel
a conference with the swarthy members of the revolu
tionary government, which was anxious to be recog
nized by the United States. The vessel next touche
at Port-au-Prince, where the President and Cabinet c
a still blacker republic received Seward with a displa
and formality that bore no resemblance to "republica
simplicity." From Hayti the *De Soto* proceeded to Ha
vana. The party were generously entertained by th
Captain-General of Cuba. Notwithstanding Seward
physical condition, he was constantly active as a sigh
seer and as a recipient of hospitalities. In fact, at a
the ports visited he was treated very much like a stat
guest. Before the end of January, 1866, he was agai
in Washington.[1]

The day following Seward's return home he had a
interview with the Danish Minister about the propose
cession, and the question was frequently spoken of du
ing the next six months. Neither one wished to sugges
a price. At length Raasloff expressed his personal opi
ion that twenty-five million dollars would be a reasona
ble sum, and "twenty millions would be the absolutel
minimum price.[2] This was certainly complimentary t
the supposed munificence, if not to the judgment, of th
United States. On July 17, 1866, as Raasloff was abou
to return to Denmark for the summer, Seward hande
him a written offer of five million dollars for the thre
islands.[3] Nothing but great eagerness to bring abou
an agreement as soon as possible would have induce
Seward to transfer the negotiations to Copenhagen. Y
no progress was made during the next ten months, a
though Seward repeatedly urged haste, caused Senato
Doolittle to visit the Danish capital, and later to try t

[1] 3 Seward, 302–19, and *Godey's Magazine*, April–November, 189
give particulars of this journey. [2] Parton, 13.
[3] Parton, 15, quotes the letter.

enlist the aid of the Russian Chancellor, Prince Gortchakoff.[1] In a note of March 17, 1867, Seward also besought the Russian Minister at Washington to ask his government to use its influence to persuade Denmark to consent to part with her West Indian islands. This was shortly after Russia had announced her desire to sell Alaska. Not until May 17, 1867, would the Danish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Count Frijs, give a definite answer to Seward's offer, which he declined. He was willing, however, to sell the three islands for fifteen millions, or St. Thomas and St. John for ten millions. And in any case there should be no sale without the free and formal consent of the people of the islands concerned. Seward promptly offered seven and a half millions in gold for the three islands, but he objected to consulting the islanders; he was afraid that some influence might induce them to vote adversely. This proposition was also declined by Count Frijs. Then the Danish Minister of Foreign Affairs said that the United States might have two of the islands for seven and a half millions, and the third for three and three-quarter millions, but the popular vote must be a precedent condition, because right in itself, and an established custom of Europe.[2] Thereupon the United States Minister broke off negotiations. In July, 1867, Seward telegraphed ordering the acceptance of Denmark's offer for St. Thomas and St. John. Still Denmark held fast to the demand for a popular vote. Seward persisted in his objection until October, and then, finding that he must either yield or give up his hopes of acquisition, consented to the condition. A monarch would not sell his sovereignty over even distant subjects without their consent; Seward, avowedly a life-long democrat, endeavored to ignore their wishes. The treaty was signed in Copenhagen, October 24, 1867.

[1] 2 *Scribner's Magazine*, new series, 592. [2] Parton, 25, 26, 27.

Next came the question of taking the vote of the inhabitants of St. Thomas and of St. John. Seward appointed the Reverend Doctor Hawley, of Auburn, to act as United States commissioner to help secure a favorable decision. St. Thomas had long been a free port, and its merchants supposed that this was the fountain of their prosperity. They asked that the United States tariff should not, for a considerable time at least, be extended to their harbor. Then, in November, 1867, came a most destructive earthquake, followed by a huge wave, and, later, by a hurricane. Each caused much damage and alarm. The vote was postponed, and the commissioners hastened to Washington, hoping to obtain some assurance that the freedom of the port would not be disturbed. No such arrangement was practicable. The best that could be done was to impress the islanders with the advantages of becoming citizens of the American Union, and to arouse their fears by saying that the United States were determined to have a military and naval station in the West Indies, and if not at St. Thomas, then at some place that would injure the prosperity of their port. So the Danish commissioner returned and made these representations.[1]

The vote was taken early in January, 1868. The voters formed in procession behind the United States flag and a band playing "Hail Columbia." In St. Thomas one thousand and thirty-nine ballots were cast in favor of annexation and only twenty-two against it. In St. John two hundred and five voted for the cession and no one against it.[2]

[1] Parton, 38.

[2] Parton, 39. Parton quotes one of the newspapers as saying "The success of the blue [annexation] ticket relieves both contracting parties from an embarrassing position, since it would have been hard to tell how the treaty could have been finally ratified on either side in the absence of a successful *plebiscitum*—the only mod

The Danish Rigsdag ratified and the King signed the treaty at the end of January, 1868. But ratification by the United States Senate was never to be obtained. When Seward's aims first became known there was no appreciable opposition, for after a long period of disagreeable domestic questions the country always relishes a change to foreign affairs. The purchase of Alaska both satisfied this impulse and brought out a free expression of opinion on the part of the opponents of expansion. On November 25, 1867, Washburn, of Wisconsin, introduced in the House a resolution declaring that "in the present financial condition of the country any further purchases of territory are inexpedient, and this House will hold itself under no obligation to vote money to pay for any such purchase." . . . After he explained that there was no intention to have this apply to Alaska,[1] the resolution was adopted. Even if the preparation of impeachment proceedings against the President had not been uppermost in the minds of Congressmen, there would have been no likelihood of the completion of the bargain by the United States. The earthquake and the hurricane enabled the opposition to cover the enterprise

ern method by which one people may now be incorporated with another, and at the same time exempt the contractors from the odium of having handed over their citizens or subjects as simply materials for purchase and sale."

[1] "MR. SPEAKER: I do not intend that resolution to apply to Walrussia. . . . But it is rumored in the papers—whether it is true or not I cannot say—that the Secretary of State has been making another purchase without consulting any one, in the absence of any public sentiment requiring it, or of any demand from any quarter. I intend that that action shall be covered by the resolution. I intend to serve notice upon the kingdom of Denmark that this House will not pay for that purchase; and I mean to serve notice upon the world that we will pay for no purchases that the Secretary of State, on his own motion, may see proper to make—that no purchase will be sanctioned that is not demanded by the public sentiment and the best interests of the country."—*Cong. Globe*, 1867, 792.

with ridicule. The treaty had no champion among the members of the Senate committee on foreign affairs.[1] It was due to Seward's skill and persistency that it even approached success, for there never was any considerable public sentiment in favor of the project. The Senate decided to lay the treaty on the table; which, in this case, was regarded as equivalent to rejection, but as the method least likely to embarrass Raasloff, who had many friends among the Senators.[2] Johnson's term expired, and Hamilton Fish became Secretary of State before all hope for the treaty was abandoned. President Grant pronounced the undertaking "a scheme of Seward's," and would have nothing to do with it.[3] In 1870 the committee on foreign affairs reported unanimously against ratification, and the Senate seems to have given a unanimous acquiescence in that opinion.[4]

Seward would have been glad to perform as Secretary what he had prophesied as Senator. He often remarked that he wished to extend the Union up to the north pole and down to the tropics.[5] Unexpectedly Russia opened the way to the Arctic. Mindful of the law of probabilities, Seward was unwilling to limit to one or two enterprises his chances to make acquisitions of territory. In the winter of 1866–67—that is, while reluctant Denmark was still reflecting—a special appropriation for the secret service of the Department of State was obtained, and the Assistant Secretary of State and Admiral Porter went to Santo Domingo authorized to inspect and make a treaty for the purchase of the gulf and peninsula of Samana. At that time the Dominican government was not ready for positive negotiations.[6] Near the end of 1867 a favorable decision was reached and

[1] 4 Pierce, 623. [2] 4 Pierce, 329. [3] 4 Pierce, 622.
[4] 4 Pierce, 329, 624. [5] 3 Seward, 372. [6] 3 Seward, 344, 345.

a commissioner was sent to Washington to conclude the desired treaty. But no considerable progress was made with the project.

Before Johnson's annual message of 1868 was sent to Congress, Seward undoubtedly saw that the attempt to acquire the Danish islands would fail. As annual messages are often largely made up from parts supplied by the different departments, and as Johnson was almost wholly engrossed in opposing and denouncing congressional reconstruction, whereas Seward was anxious to give prominence to foreign relations, some opinions about expansion expressed in Johnson's last annual message are particularly important. This message said that the President had been obliged to ask explanation and satisfaction for national injuries committed by the President of Hayti, and that the political and social conditions of the republics of Hayti and Santo Domingo were "very unsatisfactory and painful."

"Comprehensive national policy would seem to sanction the acquisition and incorporation into our Federal Union of the several adjacent continental and insular communities as speedily as it can be done peacefully, lawfully, and without any violation of national justice, faith, or honor. . . Each one of them, when firmly established as an independent republic, or when incorporated into the United States, would be a new source of strength and power." . . . . . "I am satisfied that the time has arrived when even so direct a proceeding as a proposition for an annexation of the two republics of the island of St. Domingo would not only receive the consent of the people interested, but would also give satisfaction to all other foreign nations."

In reply to the objection that the political system of the United States could not be successfully applied beyond this continent, the opinion was expressed that "with the increased facilities for intercommunication between all portions of the earth, the principles of free government, as embraced in our Constitution, if faithfully main-

tained and carried out, would prove of sufficient strength and breadth to comprehend within their sphere and influence the civilized nations of the world."[1]

During the autumn and winter of 1868–69 Santo Domingo indulged in another little civil war. On January 29, 1869, Seward wrote to General Banks, chairman of the House committee on foreign affairs: "Within the present week, however, a reliable and confidential proposition comes from the Dominican republic, which proposes immediate annexation, waives all preliminary stipulations, and addresses itself simply to the discretion and friendship of the United States. An agent from Santo Domingo awaits the directions of the government."[2] In the hope of rushing this measure through Orth, of Indiana, a vigorous leader, being undoubtedly inspired by Seward, introduced a joint resolution providing for the admission of the territory of Santo Domingo, on the application of the people and government of that republic, into the Union as a territory of the United States, with a view to the ultimate establishment of a state government.[3] The resolution was not accompanied by a report setting forth the facts. The sole explanation in behalf of the proposition was made by Orth in these words: "Without wishing to debate this resolution, I desire to state that it has the approba

[1] It was at least odd that such sentiments should closely follow this sentence: "It is, indeed, a question of grave consideration whether our recent and present example is not calculated to check the growth and expansion of free principles, and make those [West Indian] communities distrust, if not dread, a government which a will consigns to military domination states that are integral parts of our Federal Union, and, while ready to resist any attempts by other nations to extend to this hemisphere the monarchical institutions of Europe, assumes to establish over a large portion of the people a rule more absolute, harsh, and tyrannical than any known to civilized powers." This was evidently from Johnson's pen. The sentence quoted above must have been inspired, and probably drafted, by Seward.

[2] 3 Seward, 393.

[3] *Globe*, 1868–69, 769.

ion of a large majority of the committee on foreign affairs. I call for the previous question." This was a demand for an immediate vote on the measure. One member asked if the House was "to go it blind"; another said: "I would inquire if it is proposed to gag the House on so important a proposition as this?" Orth insisted, and would allow neither substitute nor debate. But Holman, of Indiana, moved to lay the resolution on the table. He was supported by a yea and nay vote of one hundred and ten to sixty-three, which brought the amazing scheme to a speedy end, as far as Johnson's administration was concerned.

In 1867, when the reciprocity treaty with Hawaii was under consideration, Seward instructed the representative of the United States that if reciprocity and annexation should come into conflict with each other, "annexation is in every case to be preferred."[1] By the summer of 1868 he realized that there was then hardly any possibility of making those islands a part of the United States, for "public attention sensibly continues to be fastened upon the domestic questions which have grown out of our late civil war. The public mind refuses to dismiss these questions, even so far as to entertain the higher, but more remote, questions of national extension."[2] It was enough to try the soul of an optimist to think that a nation, after four years of destructive and costly civil war, should let such subjects as reconstruction, "economy and retrenchment," be the prevailing considerations."

Even before this time Seward's keen insight had marked the unwisdom of the great majority in Congress and among the people, and he described it in these words: "In short, we have already come to value dol-

[1] 3 Seward, 373.

[2] 3 Seward, 383.

lars more and dominion less."[1] Nothing short of thirty years of humdrum tranquillity, prosperity, and intellectual growth would be adequate punishment for a republic so lacking in appreciation of things "higher but more remote" as to think that the incorporation of "the several adjacent continental and insular communities" was of less importance than close attention to the obligations incurred in saving the Union and to reorganizing what the war had left.

The annexation of territory, the inhabitants of which have come into close relations and sympathy with the United States, cannot be very dangerous if effected in compliance with a sober public opinion. But Seward's practice bore no resemblance to such a course. He began, in January, 1865, by searching for a harbor in the West Indies, but he was extremely anxious to keep the subject a secret. He did not wish to consult either his countrymen or the persons whose nationality he strove to change; and when the treaty had to go before the Senate its advocates declared that the thing was *done* and that it would be a wrong to the other power concerned to fail to ratify what had already been solemnly agreed to. But the sentiments expressed in the annual message of 1868 and the efforts to acquire Santo Domingo — which also meant the early annexation of Hayti by purchase, conquest, or intrigue—showed that he was an expansionist for the sake of expansion, and believed in rushing through the necessary legislation while the messenger of a disordered and ignorant little nation waited for a definite answer.[2] Many indignant

[1] 3 Seward, 369.

[2] In some instructions on another subject he said that "this government must, nevertheless, conduct its proceedings in all negotiations with proper deference and respect to the state of opinion which prevails in the Senate, in Congress, and among the people of the United States."—1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1868, 355.

otested against both Seward's aims and his methods. ney said that he was constantly trying to do what there as no public demand for; that it was extremely un- easant to think that any morning the country might d that during the night the Secretary of State had ught several million persons to be fellow-citizens d provided work for forty or fifty thousand soldiers. ward's zeal for making acquisitions was doubtless in- eased by a desire to be involved as little as possible in e disagreeable features of the problem of reconstruc- on, and to have aims that should be known as distinctly s own. Although he met with only partial success, he serves, indeed, to be regarded as the greatest prophet d leader among expansionists.

CHAPTER XLIII

I. NEGOTIATIONS ABOUT THE *ALABAMA* CLAIMS.—II. SO
TRAITS AS SECRETARY OF STATE

I. NEGOTIATIONS ABOUT THE *ALABAMA* CLAIMS

Claims against Great Britain for the destruction
American merchantmen by the *Alabama* and other cru
ers were duly presented by the United States Minister
they arose.[1] This was very unpleasant to Earl Russe
In September, 1863, he insisted that because the *Ala*
ma had not been actually fitted out in a British port
a war-vessel, there was nothing to warrant such clain
"I have only, in conclusion, to express my hope that y
may not be instructed again to put forward claims whi
her Majesty's government cannot admit to be found
on any grounds of law or justice."[2] To this Sewa
responded that "the United States do insist, and mu
continue to insist, that the British government is just
responsible for the damages which the peaceful, la
abiding citizens of the United States sustain by the de
redations of the *Alabama*." Still, he said, there was
intention "to act dogmatically or in a litigious spirit
and he admitted that the time was not favorable
a candid examination of either the facts or the pr
ciples involved. If the British government shou
decline to receive the evidence on which the clai

[1] See *ante*, 385, 386.

[2] 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1863, 38

ere based, then a record should be kept for future se.[1]

When war ended, the "*Alabama* claims," resulting om actual losses amounting to many millions of dol-rs, were still unrecognized. Adams reported, Septem-er 7, 1865, that Russell then seemed less fearful of ing suspected of good-will toward the United States; id the British Secretary himself soon suggested the ap-ointment of a joint commission to which should be ferred "all claims arising during the late civil war, hich the two powers shall agree to refer." But he pressly said that there could be no arbitration of the uestion whether his government had honestly adhered its neutrality proclamation, or whether the law offi-rs had properly understood the foreign enlistment t, or whether there should be reparation "for the ptures made by the *Alabama*."[2] As this was hardly much as a short first-step in the right direction, it as promptly declined by Seward.[3] He was determined obtain more. Early in 1866 he informed Adams that th the Cabinet and the people of the United States pected Great Britain to redress the wrongs of which ese claims were a result. A little later he said: "I e now no reason for apprehending that we shall at y time or under any circumstances be willing to ne-tiate for future contingencies without having first due gard paid to past injuries and damages."[4] As the cretary informed the British Minister at Washington this opinion, it was a very important indication of ained relations between the two powers. In July, 66, the House of Representatives unanimously passed ill designed to remove the prohibition against selling ips and munitions of war to foreign citizens or govern-

[1] 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1863, 395, 396.
[2] 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1865, 545.
[3] 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1865, 630.
[4] 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1866, 66, 74.

ments at peace with the United States, and thus to e
able American citizens to take a profitable reven
for the devastations of the *Alabama* the first time Gre
Britain should become involved in hostilities.

The Fenian movement, which was an attempt to
tablish an independent republic in Ireland, tried to
crease and use for its own ends the resentment Am
icans felt against the British government. For seve
years a large number of Irish-Americans had taken
zealous interest in this cause. Conventions had be
held in several American cities, and in the autumn
1865 a general convention in New York elected a
called president of the would-be republic, and he a
pointed heads of departments of war, navy, and finan
From the United States these "Irish patriots" se
emissaries to England and Ireland to give active su
port to the revolution. After a few thousand Fenia
had invaded Canada, in June, 1866, the arms and mu
tions of war that the brotherhood had collected and l
behind were seized, the United States garrisons on t
frontier were strengthened, and President Johnson
sued a proclamation against the enterprise. Many Iri
Americans were arrested in Ireland, on suspicion th
they were stirring up sedition and perhaps inciting o
ers to commit treasonable acts. They were treated as
they were subjects of Great Britain and not as Americ
citizens, for Great Britain had never recognized the rig
of expatriation. As the writ of *habeas corpus* had be
suspended in Ireland, Adams was soon very busy ma
ing representations in behalf of his indiscreet and unfo
unate fellow-citizens.

In August, 1866, Seward sent to Adams a long l
of *Alabama* claims. He said that it was the Pre
dent's desire that the attention of Lord Stanley, E
Russell's successor, should be called to them "in a
spectful but earnest manner," and that he should be

formed of the President's opinion that a settlement of them had "become urgently necessary to a re-establishment of entirely friendly relations" between the two governments.[1] If Great Britain had claims against the United States this government would be disposed to take them into consideration so as to remove by one comprehensive arrangement all existing causes of misunderstanding. Then he again referred to the precipitancy and unfriendliness of Great Britain's recognition of the Confederates as belligerents, and charged that "the misconduct of the aggressors [against United States commerce, etc.] was a direct and legitimate fruit of the premature and injurious proclamation of belligerency, against which we had protested, and that the failure of her Majesty's government to prevent or counteract the aggressions of British subjects was equally traceable to the same unfortunate cause." In language almost threatening, he said that when one state showed a disregard of international obligations so injurious to the citizens of another state as to awaken a general spirit of discontent and dissatisfaction, they were likely "to conform their own principles and policy, in conducting their intercourse with the offending state, to that of the party from whom the injury proceeds."[2] And he added, emphatically: "Thus we have seen ruinous British warlike expeditions against the United States practically allowed and tolerated by her Majesty's government, notwithstanding remonstrance; and we have seen similar unlawful attempts in this country against Great Britain disallowed and defeated by the direct and unprompted action of the government of the United States."

Lord Stanley's reply showed that Seward's statements were too sweeping. In defence of what Seward

[1] 1 *Dip Cor.*, 1866, 178.

[2] 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1866, 179.

regarded as the original fountain of the evil — Gre
Britain's proclamation of neutrality—Stanley said th
the Supreme Court of the United States and the Cou
of the District of Columbia held that a state of w
existed prior to that proclamation. While his gover
ment could not consent to arbitrate the question as
whether the Confederates were prematurely recogniz
as belligerents, there would probably be no objection
arbitrating the other questions at issue between the tw
governments in reference to the war.[1]

On January 12, 1867, Seward made a long rejoinde
which was very ambitious and ardent, but inconclusi
in respect to his main contention about the recogniti
of belligerency. With characteristic persistency, he sa
that in case of arbitration the United States would e
pect this question to be considered along with the claim
although there was no disposition to require that a
question of national pride or honor should be ruled a
determined as such.

Another year passed without progress in regard
the claims. Meantime it had become apparent in En
land that other differences were increasing the ill-w
of the United States. At the beginning of 1868 Sewa
called Adams's attention to several questions of gre
importance: a divided occupation of the island of S
Juan, in the Pacific; Great Britain's treatment of Iris
Americans; the extradition of criminals; and the fis
eries in the North Atlantic waters.

"Any one of these questions may at any moment b
come a subject of exciting controversy. The naturaliz
tion question is already working in that way.

"It was in view of all these existing sources of contr
versy that the thought occurred to me that her Majest
government, if desirous to lay a broad foundation f

[1] 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1867, 184–88.

friendly and satisfactory relations, might possibly think it expedient to suggest a conference, in which all the matters referred to might be considered together, and so a comprehensive settlement might be attempted without exciting the sensibilities which are understood to have caused that government to insist upon a limited arbitration in the case of the *Alabama* claims."[1]

Before anything important was accomplished in the line of Seward's suggestions, Adams's resignation took effect, in May, 1868.[2] Throughout seven years he had maintained with great zeal and efficiency the most difficult and responsible foreign position under the government. His long notes to Russell were thorough and forcible. They contained no bombast, no phrase written for display. His sterling character was reflected in his straightforward, fearless, and well-balanced arguments, and his correspondence left "no deficiency to be supplied," as Seward said.[3] He also perfectly understood his antagonist, Earl Russell, knowing when to make a sharp reply, when an elaborate statement, and when to yield to his opponent's temper. Of course he had an advantage over both Russell and Seward, for he could and did give his entire time and energy to a few questions; and he treated them in so masterly a way that there has never been any difference of opinion as to the greatness of his talents or his service.

Reverdy Johnson, a distinguished lawyer and ex-Senator from Maryland, became Adams's successor.

[1] 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1868, 142.

[2] He had asked permission to resign in 1864, but the administration would not assent to it. In a personal note of November 27, 1867, to Seward, he requested a reconsideration of the question, for private matters demanded his attention, and his time had been occupied by reclaiming Irishmen from punishment, which most of them seemed to him richly to deserve, and entering into discussion about the clothes he must wear at Court.—Seward MSS.

[3] 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1866, 177.

Seward instructed[1] him to obtain from Great Brita
a recognition of the same rights for naturalized as f
native-born citizens of the United States; to say to Lo
Stanley that until this difficulty should be overcome
would be useless to try to settle any others; and th
the United States were willing to refer to arbitrati
the question of national dominion and ownership ov
the island of San Juan. After providing for the soluti
of these problems, he should "advert to the subject
mutual claims of citizens and subjects of the two cou
tries against the government of each other respectively
He thought that an arrangement might be made wit
out reviewing the former discussions, and he suggest
a commission, on the model of the joint commission
February 8, 1853, for the adjustment of all claims of t
citizens of either country against the government
the other. After Johnson and Lord Stanley had sign
protocols touching the questions of naturalization a
of the San Juan boundary, they agreed to a claims co
vention. This was unsatisfactory to Seward, and, und
his close instructions, Johnson then concluded with Lo
Clarendon, Stanley's successor, what is known as t
Johnson-Clarendon convention of January 14, 1869.

It provided for the settlement of all claims arisi
since July 26, 1853. The President and the Queen we
each to name two commissioners, and these in turn we
to select an arbiter to whom should be referred for fi
judgment any claim that the commissioners might n
be able to decide. If they could not agree on an arbit
then each side should designate a person, and the arbit
should be chosen by lot from these two. If any two
more of the commissioners should desire a sovereign
the head of a friendly state to act as final umpire in a
case, then the two governments should agree on o

[1] 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1868, 328–331.

within six months. It was thought that an award from such an umpire might be more readily accepted by the people and have more weight as precedent in questions referring to neutral rights. All the official correspondence in regard to any claim was to be laid before the commissioners, and other documents and statements were to be admissible. By this means the old arguments about the recognition of belligerency would come up in review.

The question of the ratification of this convention by the United States was almost wholly political or personal. The Fenian movement had increased the strong public sentiment in favor of either waiting for an opportunity to retaliate in the kind of "neutrality" Great Britain had practised or making that government pay smart-money. The feeling against the President had reached the point of spite against the administration, and Seward was the object of bitter antagonism, because it was believed that but for his influence, and that of his political friends, the impeachment trial might have succeeded. When Reverdy Johnson went abroad the public knew nothing of his instructions or of the improved disposition of the British government. Therefore, when he made very friendly speeches in England, he was supposed to have fallen under the influence of former sympathizers with the Confederacy. This caused much indignation; and, as Seward wrote, party spirit raged, and the Republicans expected and hoped that the new Minister would both fail in his negotiations and suffer humiliation for having lowered the national standard, as was alleged.[1] Now that Grant was President-elect, the Republicans were not disposed to put the seal of success upon negotiations that had been carried on by Johnson's well-hated administration. Perhaps the most effective

[1] Seward to Reverdy Johnson, October 26, 1868, quoted in Moore's *International Arbitrations*, 506.

complaint was the one that said the convention overlooked the moral wrong, did not even refer to the *Alabama* claims by name, and made the whole question a matter of mere dollars and cents. But any objection was good enough if it helped to defeat the convention. This was accomplished by a vote of forty-four to one.

It was a hard blow to Seward. Although he foresaw that Reverdy Johnson's negotiations would encounter much hostile criticism, he predicted success. The possibility of having to choose an arbiter by lot in case of disagreement was likely to bring about decisions inconsistent with one another, for the American appointee would decide some questions and the British appointee others. Probably he chose the convention of 1853 as a model because he hoped that, as it had already been approved, it would be less open to objections than any new plan. After having warded off direct European intervention, it was a worthy ambition to desire to settle the claims resulting from what was popularly known as Great Britain's indirect intervention. Although he failed, and although the terms of the treaty of Washington, concluded under other auspices a few years later, were better adapted to solve the different problems, he did much toward bringing about a more friendly feeling between the two countries, and accomplished all that was possible, considering the adverse influences he had to contend with.

II. SOME TRAITS AS SECRETARY OF STATE

Seward's personal appearance had undergone slight change since he entered the Senate, save for the injuries he received in April, 1865. His face was a little thinner, and this made more conspicuous his noticeable features—a strong aquiline nose, a wide and shapely mouth, and large, thin ears. His shock of hair was now

"silvery and fine"—"snow-white" it seemed to some —but it never quite lost its auburn tinge. The head, with its beetling brows, appeared too heavy for the slender neck and slight body, and projected over the chest in an argumentative sort of way, as if the keen eyes—"lively with humor of some kind twinkling about them"—were seeking an adversary. Professor Dicey saw him early in 1862 sitting in his office "dressed in black, with his waistcoat half unbuttoned, one leg over the side of his arm-chair, and a cigar between his lips," looking like "a shrewd, well-to-do attorney, waiting to learn a new client's story." Seward's frankness and *bonhomie* at once put the Englishman at his ease.[1] In Seward's face and manner there was slight indication of his intellectual power and activity: he was almost as plain and homely as Lincoln, but lacked the President's impressive height.

Seward cannot be defended from the charge of Sydney Smith against Lord Melbourne: "I accuse our Minister of honesty and diligence." During the entire period of the war he kept long office-hours, and frequently devoted Sunday to the important and exacting work of drafting despatches. Foreign mails often came at the end of the week, and required immediate answers. Saturday was consumed in reading the reports from United States Ministers. On Sunday he could meditate in quiet on the dangers abroad, and prepare further instructions, which on Monday were laid before the President. After the carriage accident, Seward's right arm remained so stiff that it was very difficult for him to write and for the reader to decipher what was written. Thus dictation became necessary, though at first it was hard for him to express his thoughts satisfactorily by this method. While dictating he often walked to and

[1] 1 Dicey's *Federal States*, 230.

fro, puffing his inevitable cigar, his hands behind hi back, and his eyes fixed on the floor. He progresse slowly, making many changes as he proceeded. Th first draft was read to him by the stenographer, an improved as much as possible, or discarded and redic tated. The first copy was made on alternate lines, an subjected to a careful criticism as to words, phrase ideas, and general style, just as a painstaking autho would labor over an ambitious description.

In the following comments on Seward's diplomati papers there is no intention to modify opinions alread expressed, but only to notice some minor qualities tha gave the color of the politician to much that he wrote.

Seward was so enthusiastic, and his skill in expressio so great, that his despatches were spirited, fresh, an popular. The style was more often that of a politic pamphlet or a public speech than that of a diplomati document. This was due not to lack of familiarit with the usages of diplomacy, but rather to his habi ual desire to influence the popular audience, which h as a leader had ever in mind. Many of his despatche were promptly given to the press, and all of them, e cept those containing important secrets or objectionab comment, were printed annually in the *Diplomatic Co respondence*, the publication of which Seward began i 1861. When he wrote to such men as Adams and Da ton and Bigelow about the mission of the United Stat in the world's progress, and informed them that this that occurrence was natural and inevitable in times civil war and popular excitement, he was addressing th reading public at home. It is inconsistent with Se ard's intelligence that he expected to impress Russell Thouvenel by didactic magniloquence. "But," says Ju tin McCarthy, in writing of the *Trent* affair, "Mr. Se ard always was a terribly eloquent despatch-writer, a

he could not, we may suppose, forego the opportunity of issuing a dissertation."[1] Undoubtedly Seward did too much thinking in ink; and a "spendthrift verbosity"

[1] Here is part of a passage taken from a despatch to Adams:

"For what was this continent brought up, as it were, from the depths of what before had been known as 'the dark and stormy ocean'? Did the European states which found and occupied it, almost without effort, then understand its real destiny and purposes? Have they ever yet fully understood and accepted them? Has anything but disappointment upon disappointment, and disaster upon disaster, resulted from their misapprehensions? After near four hundred years of such disappointments and disasters is the way of Providence in regard to America still so mysterious that it cannot be understood and confessed? Columbus, it was said, had given a new world to the kingdoms of Castile and Leon. What has become of the sovereignty of Spain in America? Richelieu occupied and fortified a large portion of the continent, extending from the Gulf of Mexico to the Straits of Belleisle. Does France yet retain that important appendage to the crown of her sovereign? Great Britain acquired a dominion here surpassing, by an hundred-fold in length and breadth, the native realm. Has not a large portion of it been already formally resigned? To whom have these vast dominions, with those founded by the Portuguese, the Dutch, and the Swedes, been resigned but to American nations, the growth of European colonists, and exiles who have come hither bringing with them the arts, the civilization, and the virtues of Europe? Has not the change been beneficial to society on this continent? Has it not been more beneficial even to Europe itself than continued European domination, if it had been possible, could have been? The American nations which have grown up here have been free and self-governing."—*Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 167.

His first instructions to Reverdy Johnson—a profound lawyer and a man of learning and ideas—began as follows:

"Sir,—It is a truism that commercial and industrial interests continually exert a powerful influence in favor of peace and friendship between the government and people of the United States and Great Britain. Intimate consanguinity, together with a nearly entire community of language and a very considerable community of political and religious principles, ideas, and sentiments, work in the same direction. On all occasions when the moral sentiment of mankind is moved in favor of national regeneration or other political reform in any part of the world, a very cordial sympathy and regard to such advances in civilization is found to exist between the two countries. This mutual, friendly disposition between the two nations manifests

called "the nightmare of foreign ministeries"[1] w
sometimes the result.

Yet Seward's democratic method of carrying on fo
eign relations from the public square had its advantage
The English custom by which a Cabinet-Minister ca
address the country in a political speech to his co
stituents or from the floor of Parliament was not op
to Seward. His influence upon his generation w
due to the fact that he never failed to consider th
probable popular effect of what he said or wrote.
his aim had been merely to please the people and to ga
their favor, it would have been demagogical; but wh
he, like Gladstone, sometimes wheedled them, or play
to the gallery, it was either as a means of retainin
power or of gaining the support necessary to enable hi

itself more strongly now than at any former period."—1 *Dip. Co*
1868, 328. For other examples, see *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 183, 196–201; *D*
Cor., 1862, 352–53; 1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1863, 325–28.

[1] Lowell's *Political Essays*, 293. "More than any Minister w
whose official correspondence we are acquainted, he carried the pr
ciple of paper money into diplomacy, and bewildered Earl Russ
and M. Drouyn de Lhuys with a horrible doubt as to the real val
of the verbal currency they were obliged to receive."—*Ibid.*

James E. Harvey reported that he had attended the ceremony
laying the corner-stone of a monument to Camoens, "the great po
of Portugal." It was no more worth noticing, beyond the formal
knowledgment of its receipt, than the "bright and benignant sk
of that day. Seward replied:

"SIR,—Your despatch of June 29 [1862] has been received.

"The erection of a monument in Lisbon to the memory of the i
mortal poet of Portugal was not merely an act of national justice a
a proper manifestation of national pride. It illustrates the ecl
tic, conservative faculty of nations, by which they rescue and sa
whatever is great, good, useful, and humane from the wrecks
time, leaving what is worthless, vicious, or pernicious to pass in
oblivion.

"The incident seems doubtless the more pleasing to us becau
it occurs at this conjuncture, when we are engaged in combating,
its full development, a gigantic error which Portugal, in the age
Camoens, brought into this continent."—*Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 584.

to accomplish a worthy object: he could stoop to conquer, but the conquest was usually such a one as only a superior leader would aspire to. There was in Seward's nature so much that was emotional and sentimental aside from what was subtle, and it was so common for him to seek to accomplish his purpose by indirect means, that it is often impossible to distinguish impulse from calculation. The "Thoughts" of April 1st were a combination of the two qualities. The draft of instructions of May 21, 1861, to Adams was mainly the product of excitement. Adams could be relied on not to repeat or read to Russell anything that seemed indiscreet; and Seward's knowledge of this, after the first few months, gave him great latitude. When the despatches to Adams were printed, they impressed the American people as if they were addressed to the British government. But Russell could take no exception to anything not communicated to him or to the British Minister at Washington. The general effect was beneficial; it indicated to the Ministry that Seward was a very daring character, and would attempt to use any mistake they might make; yet he had neither said nor done anything *directly* that they could properly resent. Seward's success in this regard was extremely irritating to the Confederate diplomatists.[1]

Confidence and a strong inclination to prophesy, or to explain at once whatever happened, were very conspicuous with Seward during the war period; and they

[1] "The most surprising infatuation of modern times is the thorough conviction entertained by the British Ministry that the United States are ready to declare war against England, and it is impossible not to admire the sagacity with which Mr. Seward penetrated into the secret feelings of the British Cabinet, and the success of his policy of intimidation, which the world at large supposed would be met with prompt resentment, but which he, with deeper insight into the real policy of that Cabinet, foresaw would be followed by submissive acquiescence in his demands."—Benjamin to Slidell, June 22, 1863.

caused many to doubt his sincerity. His opinions repr
sented hope rather than belief or sober judgment. A
he often employed them for special purposes, he was n
always particular about accuracy.' This was how
happened that he prophesied a war that he did not for
see, as was said, and foretold many things that he di
not expect to come to pass, such as the end of secessio
and of the war in sixty or ninety days.[2] Without fir
belief that the Confederacy would soon be conquere
the foreign service could not be thoroughly efficien
But how were United States representatives abroad t
be inspired with confidence unless the Secretary of Stat
gave them the needed encouragement? As Hosea Bi
low says:

> "So Mister Seward sticks a three-months' pin
> Where the war 'd oughto eend, then tries agin."

Seward's declarations that Johnson's plan of reco
struction must necessarily succeed illustrated the bol
ness of his prophecies; and the strength of his optimis
was shown in the way he bore his afflictions. Mrs. Sew
ard, who never recovered from the terrible shock cause
by the murderous assault upon her husband and her so
Frederick and Augustus, died in June, 1865. And i

[1] In a despatch of May 28, 1862, to Adams, is the declaration tha
although disloyalty had divided Maryland, and provoked confli
there, "The Union is now as strong in that state as in any one of t
always loyal states."—*Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 103.

[2] "Great Britain has but to wait a few months and all her prese
inconveniences will cease with all our own troubles."—Seward, M
21, 1861. *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 90. "You spoke the simple fact when y
told him that the life of this insurrection is sustained by its hopes
recognition in Great Britain and in France. It would perish in nine
days if those hopes should cease."—Seward to Adams, November
1861. "I thought that the war might be ended in three months—
six months—in a year—and I labored to that end."—5 *Works*, 4
"If Great Britain should revoke her decree conceding belligere
rights to the insurgents to-day, this civil strife, which is the cause

October, 1866, the Secretary's sorrow was greatly increased by the loss of his only daughter, to whom he had shown a touching devotion in his daily letters. His mental activity and the character of his work to his last day prove the power of his will and his cheerful serenity against the flood of personal misfortune and political isolation.

Seward's habit of adapting his arguments to a preconceived conclusion, and his great tenacity of purpose in holding to his declarations, led to some very arbitrary reasoning in his diplomatic correspondence. It is often puzzling to decide whether he was conscious of it when he disregarded elementary principles of international law, or whether he supposed that by argument and insistency he could do away with principles and hoodwink his opponents. This trait was shown in the despatches about the declaration of Paris, the *Trent* affair, and several other questions, and it was conspicuous throughout his entire secretaryship in discussions concerning the warships and the belligerency of the Confederacy. He wrote officially on April 27, 1861, to Schurz, that an insurrection had developed itself, and had "assumed the organization and attitude of a separate political power"; that it had "instituted civil war"; that it had an army of invasion directed against this capital, and a force of privateers incited to prey upon the national commerce, and ultimately, no doubt, upon the commerce of the world."[1] And although the entire coast of the

l the derangement of those relations [between the United States and reat Britain], and the only cause of all apprehended dangers of that nd, would end to-morrow."—Seward to Adams, March 6, 1862. *Dip. or.*, 1862, 43. For the evidence of some of his contemporaries in regard to such prophecies, see 4 Pierce's *Sumner*, 17; Welles's *Lincoln nd Seward*, 41; 2 Coleman's *Crittenden*, 338; W. H. Russell's *Diary*, 71.

[1] *Dip. Cor.*, 1861, 257. On May 4, 1861, he wrote to Dayton: "The nited States have accepted this civil war as an inevitable necessity."

Confederacy was declared to be blockaded, and the F
eral government was preparing to exercise the belli
ent right of search, Seward complained bitterly wh
a few weeks later, Great Britain recognized that a st
of war existed. The United States treated the Con
erates as belligerents, but Seward continued until
went out of office to call the sailors pirates or "gue
las of the seas," [1] and the soldiers insurgents or trait
In July, 1861, he wrote to Dayton: "We do not
mit, and we never shall admit, even the fundamen
statement you assume—namely, that Great Britain
France have recognized the insurgents as a belliger
party." [2] For some reason Seward thought that
McClellan had captured Richmond in the summer
1862 the two great powers would have withdrawn
recognition of belligerency.[3] But subsequent eve
make it all but certain that this expectation wo
have been disappointed; for that recognition was
revoked until after Appomattox, and after the rec
of satisfactory evidence that the war-ships of the U
ted States would not continue the belligerent right
search. Likewise his efforts to link with the *Alaba*
claims the question of recognizing the belligerency
the Confederacy was, of course, a total failure. N
withstanding these facts, he wrote to Adams, on J
uary 12, 1867: "Before the Queen's proclamation of
trality the disturbance in the United States was m
ly a local insurrection. It wanted the name of wa
enable it to be a civil war and to live, endowed as s
with maritime and other belligerent rights. Witl

[1] 2 *Dip. Cor.*, 1864, 227.

[2] See *ante*, p. 184. Not many months later, when he began to
both of these powers to withdraw that recognition, Dayton ing
ously inquired: "Besides, did you not refuse to take official noti
the fact that such concession ever was made?"—*Dip. Cor.*, 1862,

[3] *Dip. Cor.*, 1862, 181; 3 Seward, 88.

hat authorized name it might die, and was expected ot to live and be a flagrant civil war, but to perish a here insurrection." Seward never seemed to be much bothered by his own inconsistencies.[1]

A few weeks after becoming Secretary, Seward moved nto a large house on the east side of Lafayette Square, n a site now occupied by a theatre. It was within two ninutes' walk of the White House and of the old Depart- nent of State. The generous hospitality of Seward's enatorial years quickly expanded to suit his new position —in official society the most important one after that of he President. He soon gave a series of informal recep- ions, so that the members of the new régime, civil and nilitary, might become acquainted with one another. He sually invited to dinner those of his callers during the ay with whom he wished to have longer conversations han the busy office-hours would permit. He lived in xcellent taste, spending money freely, but not extrav- gantly, considering the custom of his office. At times erious military disasters cast a gloom over life at the apital; but Seward early saw that there was no bet- er way to show his confidence of Federal success, and o inspire others with it, than to encourage social gay- ties. The rich "old families" were not in sympathy vith the new administration, and as yet the city had not ecome a highly fashionable winter resort for wealthy Northerners and Westerners. So there were few enter-

[1] The fact that he had championed the Irish "patriots" in 1852 ee Vol. I., 323 ff.) did not prevent him from seeing the impertinence public men in England when they suggested what punishment ould be visited upon Jefferson Davis and the other Confederate iefs.—1 *Dip. Cor.*, 1865, 413. To Bigelow he wrote sarcastically, ly 3, 1865: "European politicians will take time to forget their in- rest in Jefferson Davis while they digest the proceedings of the gov- nment against the assassins of Mr. Lincoln. Europe is impatient ith us, but she must wait our time."—Bigelow MSS.

tainments during the first two years of the war, exc
at the White House and at the residence of the Sec
tary of State. Beginning with the winter of 1863-
Washington became gayer than ever before. The regu
state occasions at the Seward house were the forn
dinners to the members of the Cabinet, to the Dip
matic Corps, and to the Supreme Court.[1] Distinguish
foreign visitors were sure to receive from the Secreta
of State attentions that showed a happy combination
formality and cordiality. Prince Jerome Napoleon, t
Prince de Joinville, the Comte de Paris, and the Duc
Chartres, the officers of the Russian fleet, the Queen
Hawaii, a commission from Japan, some special envo
from China, and other famous personages, were giv
formal dinners or receptions, or both. Most men wort
to be Secretary of State would have been worried or bo
by such obligations; but Seward saw their sunny side, a
found something enjoyable in them. Yet he was m
happy and vivacious when he had about a dozen gue
sufficiently well acquainted and congenial to allow
general conversation. One Thursday in the summer
1863 Archbishop Hughes called on him, and was invi
to dinner on the next evening. His Grace sugges
that the day would not be a good one for banqueti
The Secretary answered, "Never mind; I shall see t
you will be provided for." Secretaries, generals, a
others were present to meet the clerical guest, but th
was not a particle of meat on the table. The Ar
bishop considered it the most delicate compliment
had ever received.

As a talker Seward had very uncommon and attract
qualities. Whether with one, a few, or many perso
he was persuasive, interesting, vivacious, or merry,
cording to his purpose. His talk was much ofte

[1] A contemporary account of one of these dinners says that t
were seventeen courses and five kinds of wine.

scintillating and surprising than solemn or profound; for to him conversation was perhaps the greatest of his pleasures. The London *Times* correspondent described him as "a subtle, quick man, rejoicing in power, given to perorate and to oracular utterances, fond of badinage, bursting with the importance of state mysteries." Richard Henry Dana, Jr., after spending an evening alone with Seward, in April, 1864, wrote: "His conversation always interests me, although it is strange and not always dignified; still it is natural and peculiar." Seward's public utterances were studiously discreet; in private he frequently spoke with reckless freedom — sometimes in earnest, but often — oftener than his hearers imagined—in playful extravagance. Charles A. Dana once described[1] a dinner given by the Secretary to Goldwin Smith, who did the cause of the Union great service by his articles and speeches in England. At this dinner Seward advanced and maintained, with a solemn face, the proposition that a republican form of government was a failure. Some guests, taking Seward seriously, attacked his position with great vigor, and the debate continued until about eleven o'clock. Those unacquainted with the Secretary's fondness for a paradox, or his love of an artificial encounter of this kind, were much surprised by the unrepublican opinions expressed by their host.[2] Ex-Senator John B. Henderson, who has probably seen more than any other man of the best side of politico-social life in Washington during the

[1] In conversation with the author, August 19, 1894.

[2] Under date of December 7, 1894, Professor Smith wrote to the author: "Thirty years have now elapsed since I had the honor and pleasure of being Mr. Seward's guest. I do not recollect his introducing the proposition that republican government was a failure. If he did, it must have been for the purpose of starting a debate, or in the way of playful paradox, an exercise of wit to which he was given. He would sometimes give utterance to a playful paradox or a startling proposition with an air of seriousness which might lead his hearers to

past thirty-five years, said[1] that he never knew an one that could surpass Seward in ability to entertai a whole company of ladies and gentlemen at dinne that, although Seward often monopolized the talk, h held his monopoly artfully, not tyrannically or pon pously, like Benton or Conkling. The preserved bits Seward's table-talk[2] during six months near the end his life, although not brilliant, indicate that he ke his mind occupied with cheerful, interesting, and phil sophical thoughts. He had also a keen sense of humo which was increased by his close and almost daily ass ciation with Lincoln. He told a story well, and joi ed heartily in the laughter that his narrative create His wit was exceedingly bright at times, but his fon ness for eccentric remarks was likely to misdirect it, an cause him to be entirely misunderstood, as has been n ticed. Perhaps his best and most characteristic wit cism was the reply to a lady who, noticing his silen during a discussion as to the probable purpose of a s cret movement of troops, had asked: "Governor Se ard, what do you think about it? Which way *is* th army going?" "Madam, if I did not know, I wou tell you," he answered, with a smile.

Seward's rare social qualities were a distinct eleme in his success as Secretary. His ability to create an retain pleasant and even intimate relations with politic and diplomatic opponents was of great value at many critical moment. His good-humor and tact in all pe

think that he was in earnest." [Professor Smith illustrates this po by recounting the Seward-Newcastle incident.] "In his social ho Seward spoke with great freedom on all subjects, and sometimes s what, had it been maliciously repeated, might have done harm. Fo unately for him, in those days the rule of social confidence still p vailed, and a man could not have betrayed the hospitable board wi out forfeiting his position as a man of honor."

[1] In conversation with the author. [2] 3 Seward, 470–504

sonal matters during his entire career were unfailing.[1] The true Seward was vividly described by Dicey:

"In our English phrase, Mr. Seward is good company. A good cigar, a good glass of wine, and a good story, even if it is *tant soit peu risqué*, are pleasures which he obviously enjoys keenly. Still, a glance at that spare, hard-knit frame, and that clear, bright eye, shows you that no pleasure, however keenly appreciated, has been indulged in to excess throughout his long, laborious career; and more than that, no one who has had the pleasure of seeing him amongst his own family can doubt about the kindliness of his disposition. It is equally impossible to talk much with him without perceiving that he is a man of remarkable ability; he has read much, especially of modern literature, travelled much, and seen much of the world of men, as well as of books."[2]

[1] Charles A. Dana related to the author the following incident, which occurred some time after Seward retired from public life. Dana and Seward, in the accustomed room at the Astor House, were enjoying their reminiscences over a bottle of brandy when the card of Archbishop Hughes was brought up. Seward checked the conversation, ordered the servant to remove the brandy and place a pitcher of ice-water in its stead; then to his guest he said, "Dana, good-bye," and to the servant, "Let his Grace enter."

[2] 1 *Federal States*, 230.

CHAPTER XLIV

TRAVELS AND SUNSET, 1869-72.—SOME CONCLUSIONS

Seward resolved to employ in extensive travel th better part of the strength and time that were likely t be his after retirement, March 5, 1869. His friends wer surprised, and politely hinted that he could not endure th fatigue of a long journey. Although physically a broke down old man, who could not get on without a valet, h seemed to be as unwilling as ever to recognize that an thing was impossible for him. Formerly, his trips ha generally been undertaken to indulge a fancy or to sa isfy a taste while escaping from the routine of politic or law. Now, he wished to observe natural phenomen to study questions, to see places and nations that ha long been of great interest to him. Of course Alask attracted his attention. Then, too, the Pacific Railroa an enterprise to the advancement of which he had give much time and thought, had just been completed. passed through states and territories that he had nev seen, although he was long their antislavery champio To the south lay Mexico, barely recovered from th disorders wrought by European soldiers and the dream unfortunate Maximilian. She had already invited Se ard to pay her a visit as the guest of the nation, for s knew who had done most to save her both from mu derous assailants and from friends that would have co as allies, but might have remained as conquerors. B yond the Pacific were many peoples and civilizatio

and industries that had often occupied his thoughts and excited his curiosity. China and Japan regarded the government of the United States as very friendly; and all but the most ignorant persons, even there, had heard of the civil war in the United States and of the Secretary of State that had so narrowly escaped death when Lincoln was assassinated. As was the case with Li Hung Chang, the attempt upon Seward's life had increased his fame abroad as perhaps nothing else could have done.

Here were attractions enough to induce him to leave the quiet and comfort of home, and to risk all climates and to endure at times the roughest and most primitive means of travel. But probably there were other considerations. Notwithstanding his many successes and cheerful disposition, Seward was a very-much-disappointed man, although not a sad one. The years with Johnson were a period of great anxiety and dissatisfaction. Even most of the popularity won in Lincoln's administration had disappeared since 1865. It were strange if he had not often been reminded that a prophet is not without honor, save in his own country. The attentions that foreigners would surely bestow upon him would be pleasing evidence of his real fame and success in the world; and those attentions might help to bring his own countrymen to a fairer appreciation of his services.[1] Long absence from home and politics would at least give him new thoughts and pleasant experiences.

The fountain of his optimism continued to flow.

[1] One of his earliest letters, written after returning to Auburn in March, 1869, said, significantly: "It is marvellous to see how popular t makes a man to retire from public life." Then a little later: "Several newspapers begin to relent and relax on foreign affairs, and signs of toleration of our own policy are becoming more frequent."—3 Seward, 401, 402.

The furniture, books, and miscellanies collected in Wash
ington during twenty years' residence were transferre
to the spacious and comfortable house in Auburn, an
were soon arranged. "Mr. Lincoln's bust has gone to
place of honor in my library. We are well, and th
robins are musically singing their greetings of the se
son." So the spring slipped by. His mind was full
pleasant expectations instead of sad broodings over th
past.

The first long journey began in June, 1869. Th
party was composed of Seward and his negro valet, M
and Mrs. Frederick W. Seward, and Abijah Fitch,
Auburn. Beyond the Missouri river almost everythin
was new and strange. While enjoying all the comfor
and luxuries of railway travel, they hastened across th
plains, catching sight of many evidences of savage li
—Indian camps, buffaloes and buffalo bones, antelope
prairie-dogs, and jack-rabbits. Every phase of li
seemed to please Seward. Salt Lake City was especiall
hospitable, and Brigham Young, who had once been
journeyman carpenter in Auburn, showed the travele
much attention and answered their inquiries with a
parent frankness. After a halt of a few days at S
cramento, where they were entertained by the sta
officials, they proceeded to San Francisco. Californ
regarded Seward as a great benefactor as well as a gre
man; therefore, the citizens of San Francisco welcome
him with more cordiality and gratitude than they ha
ever before shown to any visitor.

Hearing that Seward thought of going to Alask
Ben Holliday put at his service a ship fully equipp
for the trip. Some California friends were invited
join the original party, and the *Active* started about th
middle of July to visit "Seward's Arctic Province
They stopped at Victoria, on Vancouver's Island, a
then made a side-trip up Puget Sound to visit setth

ments in Washington territory. The voyage to Alaska was by the inland passage "through an archipelago of islands, straits, and sounds." By the end of July the *Active* reached Sitka, where a few days were spent in the study of the strange life of a Russian and Indian provincial settlement.

Jefferson C. Davis was in command of the United States troops in Alaska. The Chilcat Indians, who lived a few days' journey by water farther north, had given these troops much trouble, but now desired peace. So it was decided that General Davis and staff should go with the travelers on the *Active* to visit these Indians. The strange notions of the savages afforded great amusement.[1] A scientific party from the United States was near by, prepared to observe the total eclipse of the sun. The tourists and many of the Indians gathered about the scientists at the important hour. When the shadow began to pass over the sun the Indians thought that it was caused by the instruments used by "the Boston men," as the astronomers were called. Some of the Chilcats became greatly alarmed by the darkness and fell on their knees and prayed. When the shadow passed off they were relieved and thought that "the Boston men" were more wonderful than ever. A little later the visitors were invited to meet the principal men of the Chilcat tribe. The Indians supposed that Seward was their "Great Tyee" (supreme ruler), and they appealed to him to decree that nine Sitka Indians should be killed to avenge the murder of three Chilcats of the chief's family. When Seward learned that the Chilcats had been slain before Alaska was purchased, he thought it would suffice to tell the council that they ought to have appealed to the Emperor of Russia. They replied that they had done so in vain.

[1] 3 Seward, 426 ff.

Finally, they agreed to be satisfied if the Great Ty
should cause thirty-six blankets to be sent to them
reckoning four blankets as equivalent to each of t
nine Sitka Indians demanded as a peace-offering. T
blankets could easily be given from the United Stat
supplies at Sitka. So General Davis authorized comp
ance with the request. To make the very practical jo
thoroughly effective, the Indians were instructed to a
point commissioners to proceed to Sitka to receive t
blankets and to exchange tokens of friendship with the
late enemies. The outcome pleased the savages as mu
as it amused the Americans. And the successful neg
tiations were celebrated on board the *Active* by a ba
quet attended by the tourists, "the Boston men," a
the Chilcats dressed in their gayest attire.

When Seward returned to Sitka he was called up
to make a public address expressing his impressio
of Alaska.[1] He was, of course, enthusiastic. "In t
early mornings and in the late evenings peculiar to t
season I have lost myself," he said, "in admiration
skies adorned with sapphire and gold as richly as tho
which are reflected by the Mediterranean." "The the
mometer tells the whole case when it reports that t
summer is colder and the winter is warmer in Alas
than in New York and Washington." He thought
would be impossible to exaggerate the marine treasur
of the territory. He regarded the forests as hardly le
wonderful and useful. "The elk and the deer are
plenty as to be undervalued for food or skins, by nativ
as well as strangers. The bear of many families
black, grizzly, and cinnamon; the mountain-sheep, in
timable for his fleece; the wolf, the fox, the beaver, t
otter, the mink, the raccoon, the marten, the ermin
the squirrel—gray, black, brown, and flying, are amo

[1] 5 *Works*, 559–69.

the fur-bearing animals." He claimed that the explorations had already shown that Alaska possessed treasures in the baser ores equal to any other region of the continent. The scenery passed in his voyage seemed "like a varied and magnificent panorama," bordered with coast-range mountains rising to an exalted height and clothed with eternal snows and crystalline glaciers. Because other nations were exhausting their mines and forests, he believed that Alaska, British Columbia, Oregon, and Washington were "destined to become a shipyard for the supply of all nations." After all the ridicule of "Seward's polar regions," it was a ludicrous fact, which he did not fail to notice, that a California company had found the climate about Sitka too mild to produce ice of sufficient thickness. This speech and later ones showed that he traveled with a keen eye and an inquiring mind.[1]

After returning to San Francisco the party took a steamer to the southern extremity of California. Mexico had renewed her invitation, and Seward decided to accept it. So he entered that country at Manzanillo, on the Gulf of California, early in October, 1869; and the party sailed from Vera Cruz, on the Gulf of Mexico, three months later. During this time Seward was the guest of the nation, and he received honors such as the Mexicans had never before bestowed upon any foreigner—or perhaps, indeed, upon any person whatsoever. The demonstrations of popular enthusiasm and gratitude were not less than those for Lafayette when he returned to the United States in 1824. In fact, there were many points of similarity between the two incidents. Lafayette's services to the United States had been more picturesque, but Seward's to Mexico were more critical

[1] He spoke at Victoria of "The North Pacific Coast," and at Salem, Oregon, of "Our North Pacific States."—5 *Works*, 569, 572.

and decisive. During the visit Seward was constantly accompanied by a special escort on behalf of the national government, and this was often increased by committees from different state and local governments. Large numbers of cavalry attended him for long distances in his overland journey. The hamlets and cities through which he passed were decorated with flags and mottoes, and the inhabitants thronged the streets and welcomed him with shouts of praise and benediction.[1] Wherever the party stopped for a day or more a fully equipped house was generally put at their disposition. His coming made a fête-day; and public receptions, banquets, balls, bull-fights, serenades, and parades were given in the spirit of Spanish hospitality and festivity. The National Academy of Sciences made him an honorary member, with the title of "Defender of the Liberty of the Americas," and he was presented with an original proclamation issued by Charles II. in 1676. Naturally the climax of display occurred in the City of Mexico, where President Juarez and the officials of the national government entertained him as lavishly as kings do their royal guests.

Seward seems to have keenly enjoyed these many demonstrations of respect and affection. He had no special message to communicate, but at different times he expressed the hope that the United States and the Spanish-American republics might come into a close moral reliance, "to the end that all external aggression

[1] As he passed through the little Indian village of Techaluta, where the people, being too poor to buy decorations for their houses, used such wearing apparel as bright-colored blankets and shawls and scarfs and ribbons. They greeted him, in Spanish, with "God bless you!" "Heaven protect you!" "A thousand thanks, sir!" and presented a scroll of paper addressed "To the great statesman of the great Republic of the North—Techaluta is poor, but she is not ungrateful."—3 Seward, 446.

may be prevented, and that internal peace, law and order, and progress may be secured throughout the whole continent."

Early in 1870 he took passage from Mexico to Havana, and spent about a month in Cuba. When he reached Baltimore, late in February, many friends from Washington, Philadelphia, and New York were there to greet him. During two weeks spent in New York city he found that much of his old-time popularity had revived. Deputations from different organizations called to express their admiration and to congratulate him on his prosperous journey.

The spring and most of the summer of 1870 were quietly passed in Auburn. Before June had elapsed he wrote of having "concerted a plan of travel, of a year or more, in Asiatic countries, not forgetting my favorite scheme of visiting South America." The South American part was never to be realized, but the trip around the world began in August, 1870. Physically he was weaker than in the previous year, but to friends expressing misgivings about his setting out again he replied, "Travel improves health instead of exhausting it." He was accompanied by his adopted daughter, Miss Olive Risley Seward, her sister, Miss Risley, and two or three servants.[1]

Seward was the first famous American politician to make what might be called a public voyage around the world. Almost everywhere in the Orient he was treated with royal distinction, and he was looked upon by the rulers and the people as the greatest of living Americans. In Japan the Mikado showed him what was intended to be a great honor: he received Seward in a private lodge, instead of a public court, and for the first time com-

[1] *William H. Seward's Travels Around the World*, edited by Olive Risley Seward, gives the particulars of this trip.

pletely unveiled himself to a visitor. In China, Sewar was given interviews with Prince Kung, the regent wh exercised political sovereignty, and with the Chine Cabinet. The manner in which he had treated bo Japan and China caused him to be regarded as a speci friend. Perhaps it was merely Oriental politeness, b the United States legation was informed that the Ch nese Ministers of State had never before given a strang so unrestrained a welcome. In a speech made at t American consulate at Hong-Kong, Seward expresse the belief that the regeneration of China was to brought about by means of commerce, which wou come across the American continent and the Paci ocean. "The United States must send her stea engines and agricultural implements, and bring away h coolies."[1]

The travelers went as far south as the island of Jav There they were the guests of the Governor-Gener and were taken on a long excursion by stage into t interior, where they saw many strange phenomena bo of nature and of civilization. At Calcutta the Ea India Railway Company furnished them with a spec car for their use in that country. They made a lo trip to the north of India, up to within sight of the Hi alayas. Perhaps the most weird and interesting exp rience of their whole journey was at Putteeala, whe the native prince of the province made a holiday displ which could hardly have been surpassed if his guest h been Queen Victoria. Seward entered the city in a sta coach drawn by six white horses. The other membe of his party mounted upon the backs of elephan "richly caparisoned in cloth of gold and scarlet, all namented with gilt earrings and necklaces." A tra of about sixty elephants and five hundred horsem

[1] *Travels*, 278, 282.

followed. Ten thousand troops were passed in review. The visitors were given a palace for their use, and on the following day they were entertained by Indian displays and attentions of various kinds. About ten weeks were spent in India.

The party sailed from Bombay to Suez, where the Khedive furnished them with a special train to Cairo. Later they were entertained by the Khedive at his palace and furnished with a steamer for a long excursion up the Nile. In Turkey they were everywhere treated as the guests of the Empire, and the Sultan received Seward. In Austria Count von Beust gave a public dinner in honor of the ex-Secretary of State. In Rome the Pope granted Seward an audience such as had formerly been accorded only to sovereigns and princes.[1]

The party found Paris in disorder and almost in ruins, as a result of the Franco-German war and of the more destructive work of the Commune. The public men of the new government were remarkably attentive to Seward, considering the time. Thiers, on the first day of his presidency of the French Republic, entertained the traveler. Drouyn de Lhuys, who had learned to fear Seward as an opponent in diplomacy, now met him with frankness and cordiality. Seward expressed regret that it was physically impossible for him to grasp and shake the hand held out to him. The Frenchman recalled the fact that in the days of their antagonism Seward had sent him some excellent cigars.[2]

Returning to the United States by way of Germany and England, Seward was again in Auburn the second week in October, 1871, after an absence of fourteen months. Once more a crowd of friends greeted him at

[1] *Travels*, 733.

[2] *Godey's Magazine*, March, 1894, pp. 262, 263.

the station. In one paragraph of his brief speech t
them he said:

"My friends, we are met together, I trust, not to pa
again. I have had a long journey, which, in its inceptio
seemed to many to be eccentric, but I trust that all m
neighbors and friends are now satisfied that it was reaso
able. . . . I found that at my age, and in my condition
health, 'rest was rust'; and nothing remained, to preve
rust, but to keep in motion. I selected the way that wou
do the least harm, give the least offence, enable me to a
quire the most knowledge, and increase the power, if an
remained, to do good."[1]

About this time it was apparent that Seward's da
was near its close, and that the twilight would not b
long. Paralysis had attacked his arms, so that the
were, or soon became, quite useless. He could sti
walk, but even this power was to be lost in the nea
future. Hardly any decline in his intellectual faculti
was perceptible. He continued to be cheerful an
genial, and ambitious to accomplish something mor
He received many invitations to make public address
in different places, but compliance was impossible. Th
only activity he could endure was mental, and this mu
in the nature of the case be chiefly reminiscent. So h
began an autobiography in October, 1871. The pro
ress made in the next eight or ten weeks, and the sty
and accuracy of what he dictated, show that his min
was still clear and vigorous. After covering the fir
thirty-three years of his life, he decided to lay aside th
autobiography and to write an account of the trip arou
the world while his impressions were still vivid. Not
of the journey had been made from day to day by th
aid of his adopted daughter; and during the first eig
months of 1872 the octavo volume of nearly eight hu

[1] *Travels*, 778.

dred pages was prepared for the press. It appeared the following year, and had so large a sale that it brought his estate over fifty thousand dollars.[1]

For the first time in half a century a presidential contest had but little interest for him. In that of 1872, one party was led by his old personal enemy, Greeley, and the other by President Grant, whose reconstruction policy he had never approved of, although he had voted for Grant in 1868 as a choice between two evils. If the plan to make Charles Francis Adams the presidential candidate of both the Liberal Republicans and of the Democrats had not miscarried, probably Seward would have favored his election. In the spring of 1872 Seward said: "I have ceased to be a partisan; and have no desire to surrender my independence, or impartiality, to the dictates of any party that I now see around me."[2] Undoubtedly he would have preferred Grant to Greeley, but he had already voted for the last time.

The summer of 1872 was spent with his son and namesake, in the attractive cottage, "Woodside," by Owasco lake, a few miles from Auburn. He daily found pleasure in an afternoon drive in sight of one of his "silvery lakes," where the setting sun sometimes gives hills and clouds and water the richest colors seen in Italy. His fondness for a rubber of whist in the evening continued long after he was able to handle the cards. He still welcomed old friends and had many a long and interesting conversation.[3] One who saw him about this time wrote: "His head and heart were unchanged, but the poor limbs were all stricken. . . . He could not take our hands, nor even nod his head; but

[1] Derby's *Fifty Years Among Authors, Books, and Publishers*, 84.

[2] 3 Seward, 479.

[3] Charles K. Tuckerman gives an account of a visit made in July, 1872, when they sat on the veranda and talked and smoked until after midnight.—1 Tuckerman's *Memoirs*, 122.

when we turned for one more good-bye look, he was sti
smiling, and so I ever picture him." [1]

In the morning of October 10, 1872, he and his adop
ed daughter were occupied as usual in literary wor
Later, as he lay resting upon the lounge, breathing b
came very difficult, at first supposed to be due to a sligh
cold. When his physician told him that the end was
hand, he received it with a placid smile such as he ha
often given in years past, whether the news was goo
or ill. At four o'clock that afternoon he died peac
fully, surrounded by his family.

The excellence and success of Seward's career wer
mainly due to his superior ideals and his skill in pra
tical politics. Both his natural radicalism and his poli
ical insight made him progressive; he knew that no or
could prove mistakes about theories and plans for th
future. This characteristic was the source of much
his popularity as well as the main-spring of some of h
greatest miscalculations; it led him to appeal to the n
tional treasury instead of solving the difficulties of sta
finances; to seek relief in foreign wars rather than t
deal directly with secession; to urge the consideratio
of questions of national expansion in place of trying t
remedy social and political disorganization in the souther
states. As chief of the opposition he was both adro
and daring; he made few mistakes, and usually brough
about better results than probably any other conter
porary could have done. This was because he kne
when to drop the theoretical for the practical; he wa
master of all the usual weapons, and had no equal as
popular expounder of politico-antislavery doctrines. H
had greater fertility than depth of thought, although h
was often truly profound. He was pre-eminently a ma

[1] 63 *Atlantic Monthly*, 397.

of theories and expedients, but he also had settled convictions and sound judgment. The foremost aim of his life was to be supremely great both in his generation and in history. It is now agreed that he was strongly individual, very influential, fascinating, able, and resourceful; but it was Lincoln that was thoroughly great.

Personally Seward was most amiable. Devoted and tender in all domestic relations, he was an appreciative and faithful friend, generous and interesting as a host, affable to strangers, considerate with inferiors and even with political bores—across hundreds of whose letters he wrote, for the direction of his secretary, "Acknowledge kindly," or something similar. As Lincoln said, he was "a man without gall." With but two or three exceptions, the public and private records of his half-century of political activity contain no trace of malice toward contemporaries; it was his life-long custom to avoid recording or even saying anything disparaging of either colleagues or opponents. How superior, in this respect, he was to Jefferson, Sumner, Chase, Stanton, and many others! Hence it is not strange that he often had warm friends among his political enemies. Although he joined the Episcopal Church at the age of thirty-six, he was not what would be called a religious man; he can best be described as a moral man of the world. The amusing story that Lincoln guessed a new acquaintance was an Episcopalian because he swore like Seward, is entirely plausible; yet Seward was not coarse, but quite the contrary. By education, association, and in the quality of his thoughts he was as conspicuously a gentleman as he was a man of brains. Although very calculating, he was also very human.

The reason Seward has not been fully appreciated is found in the fact that the average person more easily grasps and retains what is simple and direct: brilliancy and power may stir admiration, but not affection; an

intricate nature makes less appeal because less und stood. Cromwell, Washington, Calhoun, and Gra hold their distinct places in popular regard; Voltai Napoleon, and Gladstone, on account of the comple ties of their characters and their activities, have creat much less than an adequate impression. Seward was agitator, a politician, and a statesman, all in one. H irresistible impulse to pose and explain and appear a wise and all-important earned for him a reputation f insincerity and egotism. A perfectly fair-minded co temporary gave this answer to a question: "I did n regard Seward as exactly insincere; we generally kne at what hole he would go in, but we never felt quite su as to where he would come out." It is a paradox th precisely explains the paradoxical Seward. The varie of his resources weakened the impression and quality his moral and intellectual strength.

Notwithstanding his limitations, Seward stands in t front rank of political leaders, both on account of t talents he displayed and the services he rendered his country. And he holds the first place among our Secretaries of State. Sumner had a more thorou knowledge of international law; Adams was by bir and education equipped for diplomacy; Chase had genius for managing national finances in a critical tin Stanton was the broad and tireless organizer of the phy ical forces that saved the nation. Seward had dash knowledge of political conditions, and a versatility su as none of these men possessed, while his perfect ta and vigor of intellect, his enthusiasm and inspiring ho made him the almost perfect supplement to Lincoln. T Secretary grew in diplomacy as the President grew statesmanship. Although large numbers of Sewar earlier admirers deserted him, and criticism succeed adulation when his ambition ceased to be partisan a personal, his conduct of the work of his office was rar

assailed, and never successfully. With few exceptions, the bitter attacks so frequently made during his secretaryship related to matters outside the sphere of the Department of State, and were largely inspired by resentment at his supposed influence over Lincoln or Johnson. While Secretary he negotiated more than forty treaties or conventions; and if the Johnson-Clarendon convention had been approved—and it was not his fault that it failed—he could have said that for eight years he had safely piloted the government past every great foreign danger, and had left the United States in a much better condition in regard to all other nations than when he came into office.

APPENDIX

A

Garrison to Ross

"Boston, *August* 25, 1875.

"Dear Sir,—Your letter, in reply to mine, has just been received.

"I beg to be understood. In recording in your book what John Brown is said to have uttered concerning the Northern abolitionists, I did not suppose that you endorsed his sentiments, but published them rather to show how intensely concentrated was his mind upon his own method of operations. Still, their absurdity and injustice are none the less obvious, and quite derogatory to his moral discernment; and as, out of regard to his memory, it would have been a friendly act not to have printed them, so it will be none the less friendly and judicious on your part to suppress them in the new edition of your work, as you intend doing. He will be better appreciated by the omission.

"The truth is, John Brown was exactly fitted for the enterprise he undertook to achieve. He believed in the method of Joshua rather than that of Jesus—in the sword of Gideon rather than the sword of the Spirit—in powder and ball rather than any moral instrumentalities; and he acted accordingly, being as willing to be led to the stake or the gallows as any martyr or patriot of other days; acting all the while under the deepest religious convictions. While in prison, awaiting his execution, he evidently had his spiritual vision somewhat purged; for, writing to a Quaker lady in Rhode Island, he said: 'You know that Christ

once armed Peter [a mistake, for the occasion referred to incu
cates a very different lesson]; so also I think in my case He pu
a sword into my hand, and there continued it as long as H
saw best, and then *kindly took it from me* [a marked para
dox]; I mean when I first went to Kansas. I wish you coul
know with what cheerfulness I am now wielding "the sword o
the Spirit" on the right hand and on the left. I bless God tha
it proves "mighty to the pulling down of strongholds."' Yes
his power over men's hearts, on both sides of the Atlantic, em
anated from his prison through the spirit he displayed and th
grand words he wrote in his numerous letters. Had he bee
killed outright, with a musket in his hand, at Harper's Ferry
the world would have regarded him as simply or little bette
than insane. At the time, I said in the *Liberator:* 'By th
logic of Concord, Lexington, and Bunker Hill, and by the prin
ciples enunciated by this nation in its Declaration of Indepen
dence, Captain Brown was a hero, to be justified in all that h
aimed to achieve, however lacking in sound discretion.' I a
ways endeavored to deal tenderly and generously with him
though not in accord with his martial policy.

"Very truly yours,

"Wm. Lloyd Garrison.

"Dr. A. M. Ross." —M

B

Moses H. Grinnell to Seward

"New York, *January* 28, 1861.

"My dear Gov.,—The committee of twenty-five go on th
morn'g. They take with them a very large petition having man
thousand names appended.

"There is a very deep and anxious feeling growing up here
regard to the border states, the sentiment is strong that if th
border states withdraw, the Union *is* gone, and therefore if co
cessions are to be made, it must be done to save them. Unle
the Northern people are satisfied that proper offers have bee
made to the border states (in case they should go out) the
cannot be any unanimity in support of the gov't in the event
a civil war. It cannot be denied that there is a want of *uni*

amongst our people, and I am free to confess, that many of our Republican friends have strong sympathies with those who are ready to yield to either the Crittenden or *border state* propositions.

"I begin to despair of an amicable settlement, things have gone too far, the Cotton States it is true are too mad to negotiate with, and the border states sympathize so strongly with them that I see but little chance.

"To my mind it is clear that the new Administration is to have a hard time of it, and unless the border states are with us we might as well make up our minds to separate, for there is a very powerful opposition to *coercion*, especially if the whole South were united. We were more united in this quarter *three* weeks ago than *now*."—Seward MSS.

C

W. D. Moss to Seward

"Moundsville, Va., *February* 6, 1861.

"My dear Sir,—As I wrote you some days ago, we have scarcely left a vestige of secession in Western Virginia, and very little indeed in any part of the state. The success of the friends of the Union, has really astonished us all. The vote has been overwhelming against secession under any circumstances. This was the issue made here, and our candidate received nearly six to one. Not a single secessionist, or 'conditional Union' man, has been returned in Virginia west of the Blue Ridge. The Gulf Confederacy can count Virginia out of their little family arrangement—*she will never* join them. The election of Monday, cannot be regarded in any other light than an effectual check upon secession. The example of Virginia, will be potent with her sister border states, and without these six important states the squad of traitors in the extreme South cannot exist.

"There will be a desperate effort with counties, to throw Virginia prospectively [?] out, but even this will be defeated. The matter will have to be referred to the people for action, and the popular vote indicates a heavy majority against secession, to-day, tomorrow, and forever! A majority of the delegates elected will, I think, be found to be against secession without contin-

gency or mental reservation. This, I know, will be the case i the northwest. The result in Harper's Ferry district [?], (Jeffe son County), if correctly reported, is remarkable. Hunter wh is after the late Judge Davis' place, avowed himself uncond tionally for secession. His defeat is a just rebuke.

"We will endeavor to secure a Western man, Stuart, Summer or some other equally good Union man as President of Conve tion."—Seward MSS.

D

John Pendleton to Seward

"Redwood, *February* 8, 1861.

"I dropped you a hasty note a few days ago, . . . I tol you how we would carry the state in the convention electio The result is that there will not be twenty immediate and u qualified secessionists and disunionists, in the body of on hundred and fifty. And it is equally certain, there will not b one man in it, who is not for a final separation of the states, i double quick time—unless there is reason to hope for a perfectl full, final and unqualified surrender of the slavery question t those whom it concerns.

"Had we received a little more decisive encouragement fro our Northern friends there is not a county in Virginia th would have elected a secessionist. I would like to know fro you your opinion of the present promise of things. And would write you very fully, but I know you have no time to rea my letter. Our whole batch of old Demagogues will be swep from the field, if this matter is settled. Millson and probabl Hunter may survive."—Seward MSS.

E

James Barbour to Seward

"Culpeper, *February* 8, 1861.

"The very kind manner in which you received my sugge tions when in Washington and the patriotic purpose expresse by you encouraged me to address this letter to you.

"It's important that you should understand the true condition of political affairs in this state. There is a shrewd, energetic, intellectual body of gentlemen in this state who belong to the So. Carolina school of politics. By force of talent and industry they generally control the Democratic party organization except when boldly and shrewdly opposed. Recent occurrences have placed these gentlemen in full sympathy with the masses of the people in Eastern Va. and in all the central and southern portions of Western Va. Unquestionably they would have carried the recent election if we had not been able to hold out tolerable evidences that there was a hope of obtaining by radical appeals to the Northern people constitutional guaranties of our slave property rights. We had to place our men in the recent contest upon that ground, and concede that secession ought to follow the extinction of the hope of constitutional amendments. I for one assumed that ground not only as expedient for the canvass but as right in itself as did many others. Upon that ground most of those called Union men prevailed. Men like Mr. Botts who took the unconditional Union ground went down generally. The most potent campaign paper in this part of the state was the statement of Messrs. Douglas and Crittenden that an adjustment was to be expected. If these representations are disappointed our men (called Union men in the election returns) will become determined unconditional secessionists. They are men in earnest—devoted to the Union and would mourn over its loss as a private grief. But they are resolute to shiver the bond if their effort to get guaranties fails. It is a noble and gallant body of gentlemen. The people of the Northern states have the political fortunes of these gentlemen as well as the destinies of this Union in their hands. If you meet our efforts in the spirit in which we made them everything is safe. If you stand back and leave us unsupported in this great contest the secession of Va. is as inevitable as fate. I tell you this as no menace *but as a fact* upon the knowledge of which you ought to direct your actions and that of your friends. Come forward promptly with liberal concessions — make the Va. power and influence the potent instrument of saving the Union. So arrange it as to secure the credit in fact at least to the conservative influences of this state and you at once clothe those influences with the power to recall the

departing states. You may lose a portion of your own party North. But you place yourself and the new administration at the head of a national conservative party which will domineer over all other party organizations North and South yet many years to come. You above all men have it in your power to bring the really conservative elements North and South into an organization the most useful and the most peaceful yet seen in this country. But to be done at all this must be done promptly. You can make a shield of the peace commission at Washington. Make them lay down a basis of safety to our property owners upon which we can rally all the conservative influences North and South. Let them construct the platform upon which the shrewd partisan and the wise patriot can zealously unite. You can render a vast service to the country and to your own reputation. If at any moment I can be made instrumental in accomplishing this great purpose by going to Washington my friend Hon. John T. Harris of Va. will call me there."—Seward MSS.

F

SHERRARD CLEMENS to ——.

"SPOTSWOOD HOUSE, RICHMOND, *February* 18, 1861.

"It is about as much as I can do to get to and from the convention in consequence of my leg which has again broken out. I am therefore disqualified from taking any active measures in regard to the matter you mention.

"If the Republicans in Congress and in the Peace Conference *do not promptly and at once abandon* the positions they have taken, there will be no Union party left in Virginia. We are struggling here against every obstacle, and Mr. Lincoln, by his speech in the North, has done us vast harm. If he will not be guided by Mr. Seward but puts himself in the hands of Mr Chase and the ultra Republicans, nothing can save the cause of the Union in the South. Instead of circulating documents, it will be far better, to take care of your own friends, who are stabbing us every hour. Bingham of Ohio, and his force bill has done us more injury than an invading army. Show this letter to him and other wild men who conceive that *their* policy

and *their* principle, if enforced by the government will save us from danger. If they knew how the secessionists chuckled over them, as honest fools, they would awaken from the deep dream, which has sealed up their faculties. Let them see themselves as others see them.

"Many Republicans know me. They know the force of my character and words. If they choose to commit suicide let them blame themselves alone."—Seward MSS.

G

Thomas Fitnan to Seward

"Washington, *February* 19, 1861.

. . . "Need I therefore repeat to you what I have already reported to you of them [the opinion of people irrespective of parties], that they looked to *you* for the prompt settlement of existing national troubles and the more so now since they disapprove of Mr. Lincoln's recent railroad speeches. As his Secretary of State, on you will devolve the main responsibility of national affairs. Once in that position you can defy your personal foes, and mould all measures necessary to promote the perman[en]cy of the Union to suit the hopes and expectations of the country. All *old* party platforms are now either breaking down or [are] being swallowed up in the universal desire of the people to save the republic from dissolution, and a new one, constructed upon Union principles *per se* will inevitably spring up after the 4th of next March. *It is for you to take the lead or not in the movement.* If you decide in the affirmative, the extreme men of the North and South will have to be thrown off and made subordinate to the *centre*, or conservative Union party. *I do not hesitate to say, that no public man in this or any other country, has ever been placed in a better position than you are now, either for weal or woe of the human* race. It is for *you* to say what shall be done. You, all know, are competent to decide; no man is more so, and I am sure you will solve and determine the difficulty in the right way, be the sacrifices of by-gone party principles what they may." . . .—Seward MSS.

H

Alfred M. Barbour to Seward

"*Private and confidential.*

"Spotswood House, Richmond, Virginia, *February* 21, 1861.

"Dear Sir,—The messenger you spoke of to my brothe James did not come. Write us soon. Let us hear from you The matter you mentioned about a raid upon the capitol fron Va. is a humbug. I have inquired specially. Nothing is though of [it] in Virginia. This convention is a body of great persona worth and character — too high toned to do anything whicl looks like a disgrace. Don't let anybody excite your friend with such stuff. You gentlemen of the Republican party ough to suppress excitement against us. Force bills can do you people no good, and yet paralyze the Union men here. It i very cruel to crush us. In telegraphing you we (my brothe James and myself) will call [use?] the name of our mutua friend M. M. Dent who is entirely reliable and a member. I corresponding you would do well to use some mutual friend' frank such as —— [illegible] or John T. Harris, Millson or Bote ler or any not publicly prominent member of your party. You understand this. Or just *stamp* your letters. You appreciat the necessity of our not appearing to be in conference wit Mr. Lincoln's cabinet. Don't take this in any sense than tha of policy."—Seward MSS.

I

Joseph Segar to Seward

"Washington, *Feb.* 21, 1861.

"I am, as, I suppose, you [are] aware, a member of the Hous of Delegates of Va., as well charged with the sentiment of th Legislature and the Convention now sitting in Richmond, an with the general sentiment of my state as, perhaps, any on individual within her limits; and charged with the sentiment, I an ardent friend of the Union, desire to say to you, anothe friend of the Union, that the passage *now* of what is terme

the 'force bill' will have, in Virginia, a most unhappy effect. We are now conservative. We have demonstrated, by our acts, our ardent desire to preserve the Union of the states, as it came to us from our fathers. The passage of this force bill will take from us the strong foothold that we have. It will cause the disunionists in Virginia, in Congress and out of it, to clap their hands with joy at the passage of this measure. There is a strong states-right vein running through the sentiment of our people, and a most determined opposition to coercion. The success of this measure will be regarded as looking to coercion and will wound the sensibilities of our people.

"For God's sake, and for the country's sake do nothing, and let nothing be done, to weaken the position of the conservatives the Union men of Virginia. Strengthen us—give us ground to stand on. Above all things prevent the passage of this bill, and all will yet be well. Give 'no aid and comfort' to our enemy.

"I had designed to see you in person, but I am compelled to return to Richmond to-night, and so drop you this hasty line to be used as you see fit."—Seward MSS.

J

F. W. Lander to Seward

"Friday Night, 12 m. Richmond, Va., *Feb.* 22*d.* [1861.]

"I shall be back on Saturday. It was out of place for me to leave while anything was to be heard or gained. I have to say that the old *Whig* element is here strongly in the preponderance. It is divided into two classes. The older and more prominent men, whom it is urged here are seeking office as the result of their patriotic efforts, are in a measure opposed by a younger set of talented and rising individuals who still do not affiliate with the secessionists. It is the latter class who may yet follow the excesses of the extreme Southern movement and *aid* in the passage of secession resolutions. But the last-named conservatives will be guided much by public events. The passage of a Force bill by Congress would probably drive them into the ranks of the extremists. There is an evident disposition of these conservatives to hear the inaugural of the President elect. If that

is openly conservative, and an extra session of Congress is calle
by him, no *extreme* measures can pass here. Moderate men urg
that this convention is composed of the most conservative me
of the state, and that thus its conclusions, pro or con, will b
ratified by the people.

"The extreme radicals greatly fear some conservative course b
the President elect. They have lost much ground by his silenc
(*of late*) on existing public affairs. A prominent Whig editor o
an influential paper, although conservative, told me to-day tha
he should vote for the resolution against coercion. This resolu
tion is now being fought through the committee on Federal rela
tions. It will be reported to-morrow and adopted by a large vote

"I have read letters from prominent Southern secessionists
Their projects cannot culminate to success without the aid o
the border states. They have in view that New Mexico sha
apply for admission as a state. Being refused from want o
the quota of population necessary for a state, she will join th
Southern Confederacy. Arizona will be accepted by the South
ern seceding states. Utah will then be recognized, and thu
it will be believed that the North will be shut out in its passag
to California. California, in its southern portions, it is believed
will thus be practically revolutionized. When the recognitio
of the Southern Confederacy is made by England and France
Sonora and Mexico will be invaded. England and France are t
be propitiated by their claim for a passage to the East Indie
across the isthmus. The South rallies troops to take the isth
muses. It is urged that a movement is now progressing i
southern California to perfect these movements. Thus the
maintain the idea of a separate California confederacy whic
will eventually join the South. You must regard these argu
ments of no force. California will remain with that sectio
which will build her overland railways. The magnitude of thi
programme has no weight against sound and reliable argumen
But it is clear that Lincoln must extend his comprehensio
beyond the trifling question of the hour. He *must* secure th
border slave-holding states to the present Union. It is abso
lutely necessary for him to pursue an extreme reactionary ye
statesman-like course. He has passed through politics to gov
ernship [*sic*]. Should he take the simple ground that until th
will of the self-governed reacts he will not molest the people

should he even order Anderson and other officers out of the Southern forts, and, disclaiming the policy of practical surrendership of the U. S. property by receiving payment for it, leave the seceding states to the extremity of their own folly during the first of his administration; should he further recommend no action against the claims of the South as to territories, I believe that secession would be disarmed.

"On the other hand, if he proposes to fight the South as a foreign nation, holding the peninsula of Florida and the mouths of the Mississippi, and thereby aggressing on the South—here the old argument of the acquisition of Cuba to guard the Gulf being pertinent—if he proposes this—still he must have the support of the border states.

"And why? Why? Because the extreme radicals, the left hand of the Republican party, are not strong enough to sustain him. It is no longer party which demands action of him, but a country, a nation requesting from him a stern, unrelaxing grasp of the reins of government. It is expected here that Lincoln will call an extra session of Congress and afterwards advise a convention of the people. It is said that civil war can only grow out of his persistance in the idea that he is elected by a majority. This, it is avowed, he continues to dilate upon, forgetting that facts are stronger than arguments, mere declamation having no power against the figures that L. was 900,000 votes short of a majority, and that not one electoral vote was cast for him in the states whose peculiar interests are now at stake. It appears to me that the madness which creates revolutions refuses itself in this city to comprehend realities. Men say that it is in vain to declaim that the incoming President intends no wrong to Southern institutions, while the strength of his assertions on the construction of doubtful clauses of the Constitution are hardly dry on the manuscript which reports them.

"Whatever may be the course of Mr. L. it is necessary that he should keep silent until inaugurated. No good can issue from his declamations; much harm may come. Excuse the apparent rudeness of the remark."—Seward MSS.

"WASHINGTON, D. C., SUNDAY MORNING, *February* 24, 1861.

. . . "I arrived this morning. If you wish to see me to-day will come up by your apprising me. The committee on federal

relations on the coercion resolutions failed to report Saturda as anticipated. They will report, it is said, on Tuesday, whe a sharp debate will arise. Mr. Davidson a particular friend o Gov. Letcher is in town having come on with some half doze gentlemen some of them delegates to the convention to pas the Sabbath. He can afford information, and requested me t introduce him to such public prominent men as I know here He is regarded [as the] right hand man of Letcher, and is strong friend of H. H. Stuart.

"A few young men came down with us 'who talked fight' bu I am able to assure [you] so far as Virginia is concerned ther is not the slightest danger of a collision. Even if coercion is de cided on Va. will act with dignity and caution. But I have no heard one man say, not the most conservative man that Virgini will fail to follow the cotton states should she not receive grea concessions. This is now said by men who declare that the issu is clearly a false one, unnecessary and forced on Va., but tha now being made she can take no less. The time for argumen is passed when to endeavor to reason away the facts accon plished by secession by saying it was and is unnecessary ca have any weight in Virginia.

"The incoming President holds the whole matter in his hand He can shape public opinion at the convention either way, fo every one is disposed to await his inaugural."—Seward MSS.

K

Samuel Ward to Seward

[No date.]

"*Private.*

"Hon. Wm. H. Seward:

"My dear Sir: The following extract from a letter I ha this moment received from New York may interest you.

"'I wish I could think that there would be no fight at Pic ens, but I am skeptical as to the possibility of preventing Benjamin writes Barlow (recd ys A. M.) [received yesterd morning] in the most emphatic manner as to the dissatisfacti

of the Govt at Montgomery with things at Washington and their intention not to await events.'

"With great respect

"Your obedient servt,

(Signed) "SAML. WARD."

—Seward MSS.

[The following memoranda in Ward's handwriting were evidently written on the evening of March 4, 1861:]

[No. 1.]

"I visited Dr. G. [Gwin] this P.M. and found Senator Hunter in his study. Neither had read the inaugural and my ac of it confirmed the impression they had derived from Mr. Bright and another Senator whose name has escaped me. Whilst we were discussing the probable action of Va., which Dr. G. maintained *w'd not go out;* Constitution Browne came in from ye P.M. train —fresh from Montgomery. I purpose intruding upon you with the rough sketch of the salient facts and speculations of the dialogue which ensued.

"1. Mr. Davis had shown Browne a letter rec'd from Dr. G. some days since foreshadowing peaceful policy on the part of the incoming Admn. This announcement has given Dr. G. great satisfaction. He, too, was in favor of moderate measures and of eliminating angry words threats and bluster from 'the situation.'

"2. There is perfect unanimity in the Southern Congress—no jar; all is harmony. Tom Cobb a cleverer man than his brother is the leader of debate.

"3. Toombs is the master spirit of the new Government.

"4. Cabinet ministers are bound to keep their seats in Congress to defend their measures.

"5. No appropriation can be made by Congress without a recommendation from the Secy of the Treasury.

"6. The export duty on cotton is accepted with great cheerfulness. It is $\frac{1}{8}\% = 45$ cts. a bale.

"7. The Commissioners to France will be Yancey, Judge Rost of ye Louisiana Supme Court and Dudley Mann. The latter doubtful because on bad terms with Slidell.

"8. In Alabama the appointment of Clemens to the army has drawn off a great deal of opposition.

"9. In Tennessee Browne did not see a man woman or chil who was not a submissionist. (Here he groaned in spirit In Virginia he found people shockingly submissionistic save a the University (Charlottesville I believe) and in Richmond.

No. 2.

"Mr. Crawford the commissioner is here alone. He has fu powers without his two adjuncts or colleagues.

"He will instantly apply for a reception. If he goes bac unacknowledged as commr Prest Davis cannot hold the peopl from attacking the forts.

"Dr. Gwin and Hunter think the question had best be re ferred to the Senate. They say it is a risk that you must take

"You can rely upon 22 Democratic votes. You will hav Baker, Simmons, Anthony, Foster Harris probably the two ne Penna successors of Bigler and Cameron unless the countr should be inflicted with Wilmot in place of one of them. Thi risk is, after all, an affair . . . [illegible]. You can doubtles count upon Douglas.

"Hunter observed that it was to be regretted that you coul not leave your mantle upon the shoulders of a man of nerve t sustain your measures in the Senate. Baker was ready and wil ing but lacked position. He seemed to think Fessenden woul be a great card to win to your hand and Dr. Gwin fancied, fro some remarks of F's this morning, that, although you and I were not exactly cordial and sympathetic he might be gained.

No. 3.

"Mr. Hunter remarked that Mr. Simmons's tariff would giv the new Admn *no money* and produce a feeling of jealousy an perhaps war at the North as the Tariff of 1857 wd. bring mds to Southern ports.

No. 4.

"Dr. G. desires to see you and begs you will be kind enoug to send me word as early as you please to-morrow at what hou it will be convenient for you to meet him at 258.

"P. S.—The chief reason for recg [receiving?] ye Commissio ers would be to gain time, allay irritation at the South, when h

people would await patiently the result of negotiations,—being fully aware of the limited and finite powers of our Govt. for unforeseen cases."

L

John A. Gilmer to Seward

"*Confidential.*

"Greensboro, N. C., *March* 7, 1861.

"I was hurried from Washington by the extreme and dangerous illness of a member of my family. This prevented me from having some conversation with you that I much desired.

"I am here in the very midst of the South, and I beg you to weigh well the suggestions which I make to you.

"The seceders in the border states and throughout the south ardently desire some collision of arms in attempts to collect the revenue or in some way about the fortifications.

"The very best thing that the administration can do will be to frame some excuse to withdraw the troops from all the southern fortifications in the seceding states—such as that Congress failed to give the necessary legislation to do this successfully, and that they must wait such provisioning as Congress may hereafter provide &c.

"There must be no fighting or the conservative Union men in the border slave states of N. C., Tenn., Mo., Ky., Va., Md. and Del. who are at this time largely in the majority, will be swept away in a torrent of madness.

"For the time being every effort should be made to strengthen the hands of the Union men in these border states, and even in Arkansas. Let this crisis pass. Let the Union seem quietly to settle down with the free states and the border slave states. Let these border slave states pass out of the hands of the secessionists, Governors, legislators &c. into the hands of the Union Conservative men and then if coercion be deemed wise it can be attempted without harm to the border states, that are now mostly in the hands of ultra-extreme rulers. These states by wise management on the part of the administration can be got into the hands of Union men, before the lapse of sufficient time to be construed into acquiescence in secession. That secured

which I have indicated the more [the] treachery and plundering and lawless conduct on the part of the seceding states in the mean[time], will only make the Union men in the border states be more inclined to unite cordially with the free states, to bring the seceding states to their senses.

"If collision can be avoided—and the most vigilant care must be practiced to this end—Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana and even Texas will . . . [six words illegible] for returning to the Union. S. C. will not remain in harmony long in any confederacy. You have a mighty storm to control. If your advice prevails I believe it can pass without further harm.

"If Virginia secedes, then all the other slave states will follow her even Maryland and Delaware. I am certain of this. If we can only get clear of the Virginia convention, we will have passed the most dangerous point immediately ahead of us.

"North Carolina has elected a very large proportion of Union and conservative delegates to the convention. The vote on the convention is so very close that the official returns can only determine the result. Perhaps it may prove best that a convention shall have been called with such delegates as the people have selected in order to give a good turn to Virginia and the other border states."

"*Confidential.*

"GREENSBORO, N. C., *March 8th.*

"Since the defeat of the secessionists on the 28th in this state they have become furious. Our Governor went down to Wilmington on last Saturday among his fellow disunionists, was called, and made a speech to a large crowd of disunionists. He was bold, and defiant. He said that circumstances would soon occur, which would induce N. C. to retrace her steps, and that she would be out of the Union soon.

"The only hope of the secessionists now is that some sort of collision will be brought about between federal and state forces in one of the seceding states. I have full confidence that you in some way wiser and better than I can devise or suggest can prevent this.

"If you can do this, I believe I can say that Virginia can be kept from secession. You can do much to quiet Virginia. If the Virginia convention can adjourn without harm to the peace

of the country, a great point will be gained. If the border states can be retained, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas will soon be back. If the others never come back, there will be no great loss. But I believe Georgia and Alabama will also soon want to return.

"If for any decent excuse the Govt. could withdraw the troops from all the southern fortifications, the moment this is known N. C., Va., Md., Del., Ky., Tenn., Md. and I believe Arkansas are certainly retained. The only thing now that gives the secessionists the advantage of the conservatives is the cry of coercion—that the whipping of a slave state, is the whipping of slavery.

"When these states come back as many of them will they will come with the fortifications. If they do not find it to their interest to return let them keep their plunder—or if any whipping is to be done let it be after the other slave states have certainly determined to remain.

"The present excitement should be allowed to pass away as soon as possible without fighting."

"*Confidential.*

"GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA, *March* 12, '61.

"You must attribute my annoyance to the great anxiety I have about the threatening aspect of things in the south. The seceders would give a kingdom for a fight in some of the seceded states.

"If the administration could yield the forts &c. under some suitable terms avoiding the right of secession, and that question be left open for the decision of Congress, it would be a grand movement.

"Under a proclamation, reciting the conduct of the late Cabinet and Executive, laying the whole blame on them, and this could be done with great propriety and would do great good. If the seceding states come back as they certainly will if let go out into the cold a while they will come back with all the forts Public property &c.

"In less than two years in these states in their state elections for members to their state legislatures it will become a question whether the candidates are for reversing the order of things, are for calling conventions, and for retroceding. This will be

certain to happen. Louisiana will be the first to move, and then all but South Carolina will follow, and I pray that she may never come back.

"The great point is to avoid a collision.

"When the border states are once quiet in the Union, they will co-operate with the free states against the seceding. You have the mind to draw up a proclamation, which will withdraw the troops, avoid threatening, and acquiescence in the right of secession.

"You can do it with a proper protestation.

"If this is done, the country will become quiet at once, and the next step will be the gradual return of the erring states. The citizens will quit thinking about war and begin to consider the ways and means of a return.

"The cabinet and administration from and after the time they say [saw?] their party was to be defeated, have been engaged in nothing but a conspiracy most felonious against the Government. They have said to these disunionists—make haste get out of the way during our time, make hay whilst the sun shines. On their heads let the great crime rest.

"In fact they have let things run until it is out of the power of the present administration with the means and force at command now to correct the evils or put down the rebellion. It is due to the country that all this should be proclaimed and the administration is perfectly justified in waiting for the voice of the remaining states, expressed through the next Congress."

"GREENSBORO, N. C., *April* 11, 1861.

"When I was assured in your brief reply that in your opinions my suggestions were 'judicious' hope revived within me I have consoled myself, and duly look for a proclamation in which I should recognize clearly your ability and wisdom.

"I am so deeply distressed that my heart seems to melt within me. I cannot but still believe that the course I suggested would have been wise, and the results had it been pursued most beneficial. . . .

"If what I hear is true that we are to have fighting at Sumter or Pickens, it is what the disunionists have most courted and I seriously apprehend that it will instantly drive the whole South into secession, and that before the end of another 6

days at Washington City, there will be a contest that makes me shudder to contemplate.

"Truly indeed may it be said that 'madness rules the hour.'"

"*Confidential.*

"GREENSBORO, N. C., *April* 21, 1861.

"I have been from home, attending my courts up the country, ever since I wrote you some ten days ago. I addressed crowds of Union men. Enthusiastic demonstrations for the Union were given. I was out of the reach of the mails and telegraph. I felt sure that we should overcome the disunionists in N. C. and all the border states. All this in the face of the fight at Charleston. This had done us no harm. But yesterday evening on my return I saw for the first time this Proclamation. Soon thereafter I heard that a volunteer company in my own town, among whom was my only son, had been called for by the Governor, and that they had gone to Fort Macon, Beaufort Harbor. I came home with a sad heart. I found my own friends greatly excited. I was too full to address them. I could not rest last night.

"If I had supposed that the administration, would not pursue the policy, (or something like it) which I had urged on you, I would have returned to Washington, and have gone daily on my knees to it in behalf of my policy and to avert that shedding of human blood which now seems inevitable. Few *if any* members will be elected from any slave state to the next Congress. All hope is now extinguished. The administration, *but doubtless inadvertently*, has done the very thing which the disunionists most desired. I cannot learn whether the secession ordinance in Virginia is to be submitted to the people." . . .

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